

White Out by Dirk Anderson is a behind-the-scenes look at how a prophet's failed visions, mistaken writings, and unfulfilled predictions were covered up and concealed by her closest associates.

It is not easy being a prophet. Especially when your followers expect you to be able to detect falsehood, accurately predict the future, and correctly interpret the Bible.

Being a prophet is difficult enough, without the extra burden of having serious health problems caused by a childhood brain injury. Yet Ellen White accepted the prophetic calling. She never could have done it alone. In fact, she had plenty of help in her prophetic work. Her close associates were instrumental in hiding her mistakes, glossing over her blunders, covering up her faulty visions, and "whiting-out" her failed predictions.

The time has come to reveal the truth about Ellen White. Are you ready?

—Dirk Anderson, author and former Seventh-day Adventist

DIRK ANDERSON

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AN INVESTIGATION OF ELLEN G. WHITE

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Foreword by
Dale Ratzlaff

AN INVESTIGATION OF ELLEN G. WHITE

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Remember the 9th Commandment

**THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE
 WITNESS AGAINST THY NEIGHBOR**

Exodus 20:16

White Out
White Out
White Out
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White Out

How a prophetess's failed visions, mistaken prophecies, and embarrassing blunders were covered up and concealed by her followers

By Dirk Anderson

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Foreword

by Dale Ratzlaff

What makes a person turn 180 degrees in his religious beliefs? The answer for hundreds of Seventh-day Adventist pastors and many thousands of Adventist members is often the same: the weight of evidence. Dirk Anderson's revised *White Out* is a timely work that reveals many *more* of the "facts of Adventism" that have been "whited out" from official denominational history.

Mr. Anderson, a former ardent supporter of Ellen White, decided to take her advice. She said that her writings could stand the test of investigation. He investigated and found that they were so riddled with problems that he felt called to expose the many "white outs" in Adventist history.

White Out is a book that will be loved by former Adventists because they will have even *more* evidence to justly free themselves from the bondage and false guilt from accumulated years of feeding on "The Testimonies of Sister White."

White Out will be a challenge for Adventist leaders for it exposes, with extensive documentation, the deception regarding Ellen White that has been, and continues to be, harbored at the central core of the Adventist church.

White Out covers a wide range of subject matter as it relates to Ellen White and her writings. The facts brought to light are vastly different from what is taught in "Spirit of Prophecy Classes" in Adventist education. If it were not for the fact that Ellen White claimed divine inspiration for her writings, often stating that she received her information directly through visions from God or in conversations with "her angel," one would think it unfair to treat a deceased

religious leader of her reputation with such scrutiny. Yet not to do so is to continue the "white out."

Many former Adventists have seen that the unique teachings of Adventism stand or fall with Ellen White because they cannot be clearly derived from Scripture without making copious and unwarranted assumptions. For this reason church administrators continue to face the dilemma of how to deal with the growing weight of evidence that proves her writings are untrustworthy. Perhaps *White Out* will be the final pound that tips the now heavily weighted scale toward administrative honesty.

Dale Ratzlaff
President,
Life Assurance Ministries

Introduction

As a young boy, I can remember watching my mother busily pecking away at the keys of her typewriter. Every so often, she would stop, pull out a little bottle filled with pasty white fluid, and carefully paint the white liquid over the misspelled word. To my amazement, it would magically vanish into whiteness—just as if it had never existed. To a young child, it was fascinating.

Having grown up in a second-generation Seventh-day Adventist home, and having been educated in Adventist schools for 16 years, I was thoroughly indoctrinated in the life and teachings of the Adventist prophetess, Ellen G. White. As my teachers portrayed her visions and described the miraculous circumstances of her life, I was awestruck. As I read the story of her life I became convinced this little lady must certainly have been a prophet of God. What I did not realize was that I was only being told part of the story. Critical pieces of her life story had been “whited-out” by well-meaning followers. The critical facts these well-intentioned followers chose to exclude from their historical accounts were facts that did not quite fit in with the picture they were attempting to paint of her as the prophetess of the end-time remnant church.

My illusion of Ellen White began to fade and crumble in late 1996. It was during this time that I began an exhaustive study of Ellen White, going back to the earliest obtainable documents. After 33 years in the Seventh-day Adventist church, I began to realize there was another side to Ellen White, a secret side, of which I was completely unaware. This secret side has been kept concealed from the average church member for over 156 years.

The purpose of this book is to peel back the glossy exterior painted by Adventist historians and take a look at

the *real* Ellen White—the Ellen White her friends and associates knew. You will be surprised to find Mrs. White setting dates for Christ’s return—*after* the Great Disappointment of 1844! You will be disturbed as you witness Mrs. White in vision stunning fellow Adventists with the terrible news that the door of salvation for sinners has been shut forever. You will behold the outrageous fanaticism that gripped the early meetings where Mrs. White prophesied. You will see how Mrs. White *really* treated people. You will be amazed as you learn how damaging portions of Mrs. White’s writings were quietly removed and the writings republished as if those original portions had never existed. You will see the quotes before and after they were whited out, and you will find out who removed them and why. This book will show you how the adherents of Ellen White have been very busy over the years editing, altering, deleting, and polishing her writings. We will take a look at false teachings that vanished from her writings, and we will even see entire books that were removed from publication, only to magically vanish into the mist of history—just as if they had never existed!

As you read this book you may get upset. You may get angry. At times you may chuckle in amazement. Whatever you do, please take the time to carefully consider the evidence presented. Mrs. White said her writings would “bear the test of investigation.”¹ So let us get on with the investigation!

Dirk Anderson
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1

A Prophet Amongst Prophets

Ellen Harmon was a frail 13-year-old girl when her innocent youthful ears first heard the startling announcement that the end of the world was at hand. It was a mere four years since a fellow student hurled a stone into her face—an event that forever changed her life. The blow she suffered resulted in a severe, life-threatening brain injury, the effects of which she never fully recovered. The trauma to her brain was so intense that she made little progress in school and finally gave up trying to attend formal school after the age of 12.² Despite her inability to attend school she quickly developed interests in other areas, such as Bible prophecy. During this era, the preaching of farmer-turned-preacher William Miller captivated many in the Northeastern United States, including the Harmon family. Miller first predicted the end of the world would occur in 1843, and then later changed the date to October 22, 1844. Ellen Harmon and her family were swept away in the religious fervor of what was to become known by such terms as the *Midnight Cry*, the Millerite movement, and the Advent movement.

Ellen grew up in an atmosphere that was literally supercharged with religious excitement. Being recognized as a prophet of God was considered a high honor among the Christians of that day, and many young people aspired to that calling. In the early nineteenth century America abounded with “prophets” of every kind and description.

This was an era when visionaries and prophets were popular and attracted large followings.

During this era Mormon founder Joseph Smith was receiving “revelations” from the angelic messenger Moroni. Smith warned his followers that the second advent of Christ was at hand, hence his followers were known as the *Latter Day Saints*.³

In the 1830s an epidemic of visions spread through the Shaker communes as young girls “began to sing, talk about angels, and describe a journey they were making, under spiritual guidance to heavenly places.” Frequently those afflicted “would be struck to the floor, where they lay dead, or struggling in distress, until someone near lifted them up, when they would begin to speak with great clearness and composure.”⁴

The Millerite movement had its own share of prophets. John Starkweather, a Millerite, and the assistant pastor of Joshua Hime’s Chardon Street Chapel, had what some critics described as “cataleptic and epileptic” fits that greatly embarrassed his more subdued colleagues. He was eventually expelled from the chapel when his spiritual gifts proved to be contagious.⁵

The William Foy Connection

It was during these impressionable teen-age years that young Ellen became associated with the “prophets” of the Millerite movement. In 1835, William Foy, an African-American living in New England, gave his heart to Christ and became a member of the Freewill Baptist Church. In 1842, while preparing to take holy orders as an Episcopal minister, he had two visions. Foy began travelling around the local area relating his visions to various Millerite groups. Adventist historian J.N. Loughborough describes his popularity:

“Having a good command of language, with fine descriptive powers, he created a sensation wherever he went. By invitation he went from city to city to tell of the wonderful things he had seen; and in order to accommodate the vast crowds who assembled to hear him, large halls were secured, where he related to thousands what had been shown him of the heavenly world...”⁶

Young Ellen went to listen to Prophet Foy speak in her hometown of Portland, Maine at Beethoven Hall. Later, she also traveled with her father to hear him speak in the nearby city of Cape Elizabeth.⁷ She was no doubt captivated as Foy described leaving his body and witnessing the beauties of paradise. She was probably held spellbound to hear Foy describe how the guardian angels on earth communicate with the angels up in heaven—the ones charged with recording the deeds of humans:

“I then beheld angels ascending and descending to and from the earth; they bore tidings to the recording angels.” (p. 20)

To the people of the 1840s, this made perfect sense. If you wanted to contact someone far away, you either sent a messenger or sent a letter in the mail. The telegraph had just recently been invented, and the advent of radio and telephone were yet future. How else could the guardian angels on earth communicate with the recording angels in heaven except by flying back and forth, carrying messages?

By 1844, Foy had made a name for himself as a prophet. When this experienced and accomplished prophet heard that the young seventeen-year-old Ellen Harmon had her first vision, he probably felt it his duty to visit the child to give her some counsel or words of advice, prophet to prophet. So an interview was arranged and the two exchanged thoughts and ideas.

The evening following this interview, Ellen was scheduled to speak of her first vision at a meeting held east of Portland. Unbeknown to her, Foy was in the audience. Ellen began speaking, and in the midst of her presentation Foy, unable to contain himself any longer, leapt to his feet and declared that what she was relating was exactly what he had seen.⁸ Foy made no mention the two had met together the previous day to exchange prophetic notes. He probably did not want to embarrass the young prophetess, nor would he want the audience to think there had been any scheming between the two of them. After making the announcement, he excused himself from the meeting and had no further recorded contact with her for the remainder of his life.

Later, in 1845, when Foy published his visions in a pamphlet, he had them copyrighted. He had learned his lesson. A prophet’s visions are important intellectual property! His experience with Ellen Harmon probably left him a little wary about prophetic property rights. There is little doubt that Ellen treasured the copy of Foy’s visions she had in her possession.⁹ Foy’s splendid descriptions of heaven must have thrilled her. In fact, despite the copyright, a few years later, when Sister White was writing out her own visions, her descriptions of heaven were strikingly similar to those of Foy’s:

Ellen G. White <i>Christian Experience and Views of Mrs. White (1851)</i>	William E. Foy <i>The Christian Experience of William E. Foy (1845)</i>
All the angels that are commissioned to visit the earth hold a golden card , which they present to the angels at the gates of the city as they pass in and out. (pp. 37, 39)	I then beheld countless millions of shining ones coming with cards in their hands . These shining ones became our guides. The cards , they bore shone above the brightness of the sun; and they placed them in our hands but the name of them I could not read. (pp. 10, 11)

On either side of the chariot were wings, and beneath it wheels. And as the chariot rolled upwards, the wheels cried Holy, and the wings as they moved, cried Holy , and the retinue of Holy Angels around the cloud cried Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty. (p. 35)	There were countless millions of bright angels, whose wings were like pure gold, and they sang with loud voices, while their wings cried, holy . (p. 18)
And as the chariot rolled upward, the wheels cried, “Holy,” and the wings, as they moved, cried, “Holy,” and the retinue of holy angels around the cloud cried, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!” <i>Maranatha</i> , p. 305	Behind the angel I beheld countless millions of bright chariots. Each chariot had four wings like flaming fire and an angel followed after the chariot, and the wings of the chariot, and the wings of the angel cried as one voice saying “holy.” (p. 18)
On one side of the river was a trunk of a tree, and a trunk on the other side of the river, both of pure, transparent gold ... Its branches bowed to the place where we stood, and the fruit was glorious; it looked like gold mixed with silver. (p. 17)	I then beheld in the middle of this boundless place a tree, the body of which was like unto transparent glass , and the limbs were like transparent gold , extending all over this boundless place...the fruit appeared like clusters of grapes in pictures of pure gold . (pp. 14,15)
I asked Jesus to let me eat of the fruit. He said: “Not now. Those who eat of the fruit of this land go back to earth no more ... (pp. 19, 20)	With a lovely voice the guide spoke to me and said, “ Those who eat of the fruit of this tree return to earth no more. ” (p. 15)
...in His right hand was a sharp sickle; in His left, a silver trumpet . (p. 16)	Against His breast and across his left hand was as it were a trumpet of pure silver ... (p. 18)
Here on the sea of glass the 144,000 stood in a perfect square . Some of them had very bright crowns , others not so bright. ... And they were all clothed with a glorious white mantle from their shoulders to their feet. (p. 11)	I then saw in midst of the place an innumerable multitude, arrayed in white raiment, standing in a perfect square, having crowns of unfading glory upon their heads. (p. 19)
Jesus raised his mighty glorious arm, laid hold of the pearly gate and swung it back on its glittering	Before the gate stood a tall and mighty angel clothed in raiment pure and white; his eyes were like flaming fire,

hinges , and said to us, You have washed your robes in my blood, stood stiffly for my truth, enter in. We all marched in and felt we had a perfect right in the City.(p. 11)	and his he wore a crown upon his head which lighted up this boundless plain. The angel raised his right hand, and laid hold upon the gate and opened it; and as it rolled upon its glittering hinges , he cried with a loud voice to the heavenly host, “Your all welcome!” Then the guardian angels in the midst of the saints struck a song of triumph, and the saints, both great and small sang with loud voices and passed within the gate... (p. 10)
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After Foy viewed the beauties of heaven through a vision, his angel commanded him:

“Thy spirit must return to yonder world, and thou must reveal these things which thou hast seen...”¹⁰

Foy probably did not realize it at the time, but within a few short years, Ellen White’s guide would echo the same words to her:

“He said, you must go back to the earth again, and relate to others, what I have revealed to you.”¹¹

The Adventist historian J.N. Loughborough claims that shortly after 1845, Foy sickened and died, thereby passing the *prophetic baton* to Ellen White, who took up Foy’s calling as the Adventist prophet. This is an example of one of the infamous myths that went into the making of a prophet. Nothing could be further from the truth. Foy did not sicken and die. There is no indication that Foy ever recanted or abandoned his calling. In fact, Foy continued in Christian ministry, pastoring various Freewill Baptist churches throughout Maine and witnessing for the Lord until his death 48 years later in 1893.¹²

Other Millerite Visionaries

Ellen also had a prophet in her extended family. Her sister Mary's brother-in-law, Hazen Foss, claimed to have received a vision from God. While some believed the prophets, not all in the Millerite movement were favorably disposed towards them. In the final days of that movement there was so much religious excitement that Millerite leader Joshua Himes complained of being in "mesmerism seven feet deep."¹³

Fanaticism continued to plague the Millerites even after the October 22 disappointment, and it seemed particularly prevalent among the "shut door" believers. These "shut door" advocates were members of the Advent movement who believed that the door of salvation was forever shut on October 22, 1844, to all who had refused to embrace William Miller's time proclamation. It was among these "shut door" believers that Ellen Harmon would later rise to prominence as the group's leading prophet.

In Springwater Valley, New York, an African-American "shut door" advocate named Houston claimed that at times God spoke to him in visions. The shut-door group in Ellen Harmon's hometown of Portland, Maine was even more notorious in Millerite circles. Joshua Himes decried its "continual introduction of visionary nonsense."¹⁴ In March of 1845, Himes informed Miller that a Sister Clemons of Ellen Harmon's hometown of Portland, Maine, "has become very visionary and disgusted nearly all the good friends here." A couple of weeks later he reported that another Portland sister had received a vision showing that Sister Clemons was of the Devil. Himes concluded, "Things are in a bad way at Portland."¹⁵

2

A Disappointing Start

When Christ failed to return as predicted on October 22, 1844, the religious fervor gradually began to die down and many of the "prophets" returned to their former professions. While most gave up the Millerite doctrine, a few persisted in it. Among those few was Ellen Harmon. Her visions seemed to suggest the return of Christ was still imminent. She felt compelled by God to share those visions with others. She began traveling around the northeastern United States sharing her visions with the scattered Adventist believers. She met with mixed results. While some were encouraged by her visions others had their doubts. At least one eyewitness felt her visions were more a product of imagination than inspiration:

"I cannot endorse sister Ellen's visions as being of divine inspiration, as you [James White] and she think them to be...I think that what she and you regard as visions from the Lord, are only religious reveries, in which her imagination runs without control upon themes in which she is most deeply interested. While so absorbed in these reveries, she is lost to every thing around her."¹⁶

It must have been frustrating to the young prophetess that so many people who witnessed her visions, including

her own family, had doubts as to their divine origin. Ellen would later complain that “many” of those who witnessed her early visions thought they were the product of “excitement and mesmerism” rather than divine inspiration.¹⁷ Isaac Wellcome, an Adventist minister who witnessed several of her early visions describes them as follows:

“Ellen G. Harmon...was strangely exercised in body and mind...falling to the floor...(we remember catching her twice to save her from falling upon the floor)...in meetings she would speak with great vehemence and rapidity until falling down, when, as she claimed, wonderful views of heaven and what was being transacted there were shown her. She claimed to have seen that Christ had left the office of mediation and assumed that of Judge, had closed the door of mercy, and was blotting out the names, from the book of life.... We saw her in Poland, Portland, Topsham, and Brunswick during the beginning of this career, and often heard her speak, and several times saw her fall, and heard her relate wonders which she said her heavenly Father permitted her to see. Her supernatural or abnormal views were not readily understood as visions, but as spiritual views of unseen things, which were quite common among the Methodists.... These visions were but the echoes of Elder [Joseph] Turner and others’ preaching, and we regard them as the product of the overexcited imagination of her mind, and not as facts.”¹⁸

Mr. Wellcome makes a point that the visions he heard Ellen Harmon relate were merely the echoing of Millerite Joseph

Turner’s preaching. We will discuss Mr. Turner and his relationship with Ellen Harmon in chapter 5.

It was during 1845 that Ellen Harmon met the fervent young minister who was later to become her husband, James White. James and Ellen began traveling together, preaching to the scattered flock of Adventists who still held out hope that Christ’s return was imminent. The people had been bitterly disappointed and were anxious to hear that Christ’s return was still at hand. The aspiring prophetess raised the dashed hopes of the Millerite believers by prophesying that the Lord was coming in June of 1845. When this date passed without event, the prophetess brushed the mistake aside and pushed the date back to September. Lucinda Burdick, a minister’s wife who witnessed the visions of Ellen Harmon in 1845 describes the chaos these time-setting predictions caused amongst the Adventist believers:

“I became acquainted with James White and Ellen Harmon (now Mrs. White) early in 1845. ... She pretended God showed her things which did not come to pass. At one time she saw that the Lord would come the second time in June 1845. The prophecy was discussed in all the churches, and in a little ‘shut-door paper’ published in Portland, Maine. During the summer, after June passed, I heard a friend ask her how she accounted for the vision? She replied that ‘they told her in the language of Canaan, and she did not understand the language; that it was the next September that the Lord was coming, and the second growth of grass instead of the first in June.’

“September passed, and many more have passed since, and we have not seen the Lord yet. It soon

became evident to all candid persons that many things must have been ‘told her in the language of Canaan,’ or some other which she did not understand, as there were repeated failures. I could mention many which I knew of myself.”¹⁹

Despite her first two failures at predicting Christ’s return, Ellen and James continued to preach His imminent Advent. They felt it was so near that marriage was out of the question. In a letter written in 1846 James viewed marriage as a denial of their faith:

“Of late, the ‘Hope Within the Veil’ has turned a short corner, and I’m glad of it; for the Editor and Publisher, some weeks before the change of views, denied their faith, in being published for marriage. We look upon it as a wile of the devil. The firm brethren in Maine who are waiting for Christ to come have no fellowship with such a move.”²⁰

While James may have publicly viewed marriage as a “denial of the faith” and a “wile of the devil,” questions were being raised about the propriety of James and Ellen traveling together unmarried. So, under the pretense of avoiding the “appearance of evil,” they decided to marry.

As they traveled through Maine Ellen received frightening visions warning that the wicked were going to rise up against them and throw them into prison. They went about publishing these alarming visions to all the churches visited. Unfortunately, this backfired when the prophesied events did not come to pass. Lucinda Burdick, an eyewitness of those visions, relates the story:

“Once, when on their way to the eastern part of Maine, she saw that they would have great trouble with the wicked, be put in prison, etc. This they told in the churches as they passed through. When they came back, they said they had a glorious time.

“Friends asked if they had seen any trouble with the wicked, or prisons? They replied, ‘None at all.’ People in all the churches soon began to get their eyes open, and came out decidedly against her visions; and, just as soon as they did so, she used to see them ‘with spots on their garments,’ as she expressed it. I was personally acquainted with several ministers, whom she saw landed in the kingdom with ‘Oh! such brilliant crowns, FULL of stars.’ As soon as they took a stand against the visions, she saw them ‘doomed, damned, and lost for ever, without hope.’”²¹

Early in her career Mrs. White exhibited a trait that was to follow her the remainder of her days. When one of her prophecies failed or when she made mistakes, instead of acknowledging her failures, she would turn with a vengeance upon those who pointed out her mistakes and condemn them as “damned” and “lost.” Rather than encouraging faith in her gift, she managed to offend a number of people. Now, because of this practice and because of Ellen’s failed prophecies, the Whites now found themselves in an increasingly hostile environment. Many of the Advent believers who at one time had accepted Sister White as a prophet, had now turned against her. The Whites’ credibility and financial resources were at an all-time low. What they needed was an influential friend who could help them through this difficult time.

The Whites Meet Joseph Bates

Joseph Bates, a retired sea captain turned preacher, was held in high regard by the Adventists. He was influential, had some education, and was a man of undimmed moral character. He met the Whites in the fall of 1846. At that time the young prophetess was only nineteen, feeble, uneducated, and still unknown to most Adventists. James was twenty-six, and had a limited education. He and his wife were poor and destitute. An influential friend like Joseph Bates was exactly what the young couple needed. At first however, the Whites and Joseph Bates were a bit skeptical of each other. James and Ellen were skeptical of Bates' Sabbath, which they saw little value in. Meanwhile, Bates had his doubts about Ellen's prophetic gift. At one point he wrote:

“It is now about two years since I first saw the author [Ellen White], and heard her relate the substance of her visions as she has since published them in Portland (April 6, 1846). Although I could see nothing in them that militated against the word, yet I felt alarmed and tried exceedingly, and for a long time unwilling to believe that it was any thing more than what was produced by a protracted debilitated state of her body.”²²

Like many others, Bates felt Ellen's visions were more a product of ill health caused by her terrible brain injury rather than divinely-inspired revelations. However, with a well-timed vision upon Bates' favorite subject—astronomy—the Whites were eventually able to overcome his resistance to Ellen's visions. In November of 1846, Ellen had a special vision of the Solar System at a meeting that Bates attended. As Bates listened, she described

various details of the Solar System and the so-called gap in Orion. Orion was then a topic of great interest to the public because of the recent telescopic observations of astronomer William Parsons. Just months earlier Bates had written a tract entitled, “The Opening Heavens,” relating the discoveries, but Mrs. White assured Bates she had no prior knowledge of astronomy.

Mrs. White, while in vision, began to describe the various planets in the solar system. As she gave a description of rosy-tinted belts which she saw across the surface of some planet, she exclaimed, “I see four moons.” Bates replied, “Oh, she is viewing Jupiter!”²³ She then made motions as though traveling through space and then again proceeded to describe belts and rings, saying, “I see seven moons.” Elder Bates exclaimed, “She is describing Saturn.”²⁴ An Adventist lady named Mrs. Truesdail, who was also present at the same meeting, describes how this vision erased all doubts in Bates' mind regarding Mrs. White's visions:

“Sister White was in very feeble health, and while prayers were offered in her behalf, the Spirit of God rested upon us. We soon noticed that she was insensible to earthly things. This was her first view of the planetary world. After counting aloud the moons of Jupiter, and soon after those of Saturn, she gave a beautiful description of the rings of the latter. She then said, ‘**The inhabitants are a tall, majestic people, so unlike the inhabitants of earth. Sin has never entered here.**’ It was evident from Brother Bates' smiling face that his past doubts in regard to the source of her visions were fast leaving him. We all knew that Captain Bates was a great lover of astronomy, as he would often locate many of the heavenly bodies for our

instruction. When Sister White replied to his questions, after the vision, saying that she had never studied or otherwise received knowledge in this direction, he was filled with joy and happiness. He praised God, and expressed his belief that this vision concerning the planets was given that he might never again doubt.”²⁵

While this vision apparently erased Bates’ doubts, it would have quite the opposite effect upon later generations. Jupiter’s fifth moon was discovered in 1892, but by then, Bates was gone and the 1846 vision had long been forgotten. Satellite probes would later discover that the surfaces of both Jupiter and Saturn consist of liquid hydrogen, and both are devoid of life, as we know it. Furthermore, Jupiter has at least 16 moons and a band of rings. Saturn has at least 18 moons. While she got close enough to Jupiter and Saturn to see the “tall, majestic people,” she never mentions seeing the other moons and the rings around these planets. The vision certainly would not be very convincing to a modern audience, which is perhaps one of the reasons why the vision is rarely mentioned by Adventists today. Like many of her early visions, it sounded good at the time, but became less and less believable as the years passed by. Nevertheless, it served its purpose. Bates was convinced, and the Whites and Bates formed a friendship that was to last a number of years.

It appears that the Whites quickly adopted Bates’ peculiar teachings regarding the Christ’s return. Bates believed probation closed for the world in 1844, and the Advent believers were now in a seven-year testing period. Bates describes how he came up with this seven-year period:

“The seven spots of blood on the Golden Altar and before the mercy seat, I fully believe, represent the duration of the judicial proceedings on the living saints in the Most Holy, all of which time they will be in their affliction, even seven years; God by his voice will deliver them, ‘for it is the blood that maketh the atonement for the soul’ (Lev. 17:11). Then the number seven will finish the day of atonement.”²⁶

It is easy to see why the Whites were a little skeptical of Bates at first. It takes a great leap of faith to conclude that seven spots of blood on the altar equate to a seven-year period of testing! Bates believed that those who were not a part of the 1844 Millerite movement were lost and could not be saved, and that the Adventists were now being tested upon the Sabbath truth. The Whites eventually adopted this teaching and began keeping the Sabbath with Bates from 6 p.m. Friday evening to 6 p.m. Saturday evening. 1851 marked the end of the seven years of testing, and as the time approached, the Whites once again began trumpeting the imminent return of Christ, and once again their meager band of followers got excited.

In 1849 Joseph Bates announced that the “time of trouble is begun,”²⁷ and in the summer of 1849, a local pestilence struck the region. Mrs. White, seeing this as a fulfillment of prophecy indicating the end of the world, predicted this pestilence would soon become widespread. Her alarming prophecy appeared in the September 1849 issue of the White’s short-lived magazine *The Present Truth*:

“What we have seen and heard of the pestilence, is but the beginning of what we shall see and hear. **Soon the dead and dying will be all around us.**”²⁸

With this prophecy, Mrs. White continued on with what can only be described as a significant string of prophetic failures and debacles. Not long after this prophecy was penned, the pestilence ended and the United States entered a period of relative peace and prosperity that lasted for many years. Thirty-five years later, in 1882, when the above article was republished in the book *Early Writings*, the statement about the “dead and dying” was strangely absent. It had been removed by an editor who must have realized that if it had been included, it would have raised considerable doubts about Mrs. White’s prophetic abilities.

By April of 1850 Mrs. White was proclaiming that “the mighty shaking has commenced.”²⁹ Meanwhile, her husband James was claiming that the departure of God’s people from Babylon (Rev. 18:4) was already complete:

“Babylon, the nominal church is fallen. God’s people have come out of her. She is now the ‘synagogue of Satan’ (Rev. 3:9). ‘The habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird’ (Rev. 18:2).”³⁰

On June 27, 1850, Mrs. White wrote that only a few months remained for the people to get ready:

“My accompanying angel said, ‘Time is almost finished. Get ready, get ready, get ready.’ . . . now time is almost finished . . . and **what we have been years learning, they will have to learn in a few months.**”³¹

Mrs. White was telling the Advent believers that the truths about the Sabbath and the heavenly sanctuary that she and her associates had spent several years learning would have

to be learned quickly by new converts in the earth’s few remaining months.

Miss Sarah B. Harmon, older sister of Mrs. White, wrote a letter to Mrs. P.D. Lawrence of Brookfield, New York, on July 29, 1850, saying: “I believe this is the last winter we shall see before Jesus, our great High Priest, comes out. Oh, let us live for God and sacrifice for him faithfully.”

By September of 1850 Mrs. White was warning that they were in the “sealing time” and that Jesus was nearly finished in the Most Holy Place:

“I saw that the time for Jesus to be in the most Holy place was nearly finished, and that time cannot last but a very little longer. . . . The sealing time is very short and soon will be over.”³²

This was one of the last in a series of disappointing predictions about Christ’s return. When the 1851 date passed without event, Joseph Bates lost prominence among the Adventist believers, as did the Whites. James decided to scuttle the *Present Truth* magazine, and start a new magazine entitled *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*. He republished many of Mrs. White’s articles but was careful to delete those parts that would expose her to charges of being a false prophet.

Being a prophetess is not an easy task, especially when your followers expect you to be able to detect false teachings. Bates was wrong about Christ’s return in 1851 and God’s prophetess was apparently led astray by his teachings. Her followers probably wondered why her angelic messengers never once hinted to her that Bates’ theory was wrong, despite the fact she claimed to have received many dozens of visions during this time period. The people had expected more of a prophet. They wanted a prophet like the Biblical prophets who stood like towering

rocks of truth while every wind of doctrine blew around them. They wanted a prophet who could detect errors like the one Bates' propagated and warn the people. It was a high expectation for a young prophetess to live up to.

Ellen White's first decade as a prophetess can only be described as disappointing, to both herself personally and to her followers. Her stinging denunciations of those who doubted her visions only served to make her critics more upset with her, and the unconvinced even more skeptical. Converts to Sabbath-keeping were few and far between. At this rate, it may take many decades to reach the magic 144,000 number. As her prophecies repeatedly failed to come to pass, many were calling into question her divine inspiration. For a period of time in the early 1850s, her influence appeared broken, and she seemed to have few visions. It was a disappointing start to a prophetic career.

Mrs. White seems to have slowly learned her lesson about predicting Christ's return. She gradually stopped making specific forecasts about His second advent. Her last specific prediction was made at a conference in 1856:

"I was shown the company present at the Conference. Said the angel: 'Some food for worms, some subjects of the seven last plagues, some will be alive and remain upon the earth to be translated at the coming of Jesus.'"³³

Since this prediction did not fail immediately, it received wide publication in the volumes entitled "Testimonies for the Church." Church leaders were in somewhat of a quandary as to what to do when all of the people who attended the conference passed away. Since they could not delete the statement without raising a great controversy, they began explaining it away as a conditional prophecy. The failed prophecy was not Ellen White's fault.

It was the Adventist people's fault. They had not converted enough people to Adventism so God had to delay His plans to return. This explanation would probably have been more convincing if the conditions had been spelled out when the vision was given, not years later, after all the people at the conference had died. What good is a prophecy if its failure can be explained away later by claiming that some previously unknown and undefined conditions were never met?

To those who were willing to accept the "conditional prophecy" explanation, one question still lingered: How did Mrs. White's angel know when Christ was returning? After all, Jesus said, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, **not the angels** of heaven, but my Father only." (Matt. 24:36)

After a period of nearly 30 years Mrs. White once again saw indications of Christ's imminent return. In 1884 she sent out a testimony calling for celibacy among Adventists:

"It was not in accordance with our faith or God's will that our missionaries should fill their hands with cares and burdens that were not essential to the work. . . . I was shown that Brother and Sister V_____ had departed from God's counsel in bringing into the world children. . . . The time is and has been for years, that the bringing of children into the world is more an occasion of grief than joy. . . . Satan controls these children, and the Lord has but little to do with them. . . . **The time has come when, in one sense, they that have wives be as though they had none.**"³⁴

As could be expected, the testimony resulted in chaos among those who heard it. One Adventist writes his perspective on the events that ensued:

“That testimony was read before gatherings of the people, but was evidently destroyed when it met with so much resistance, and the proof of its previous existence can be only had from those who heard it read or was [*sic*] an eye witness to the consternation that it caused. . . . Many tried to live up to her instructions. I sat in the Adventist church in Missoula, Montana, and heard the minister, Rollin D. Quinn, get up before the congregation and with tears streaming down his cheeks, confess that Satan had tempted him during the dark hours of the night and he had sinned but with God’s help he would stand firm from now on, only to repeat the scene the following Sabbath. One minister told my father that he did not dare trust himself home with his wife, so he had her meet him at the railroad station.”³⁵

For obvious reasons, Mrs. White’s celibacy testimony was never published in the volumes “Testimonies for the Church.” It remained hidden away safely in a vault until many of Mrs. White’s manuscripts were released by the White Estate in the 1980s.

Young Ellen was caught up and swept away in the religious fervor of the 1840s. She tried her best to emulate the successful prophets of her time. She tried her best to find new materials for her visions to capture the interest of the people. She tried her best to inspire her followers with the soon return of Christ. But despite her best efforts, things did not go as planned. The prophet Foy showed up by surprise at her meeting, stood up in the middle of it and yelled it was exactly as he had seen, and then walked out on her, never to return. Her failed predictions about persecution and the return of Christ in 1845 and 1846 had

unsettled many believers’ faith in her. She finally found a friend in Captain Bates, someone she thought she could trust. Unfortunately, her endorsements of his flawed prophetic teachings nearly ruined her already-damaged reputation. At some point she must have asked herself whether she really had what it takes to be a prophet of God.

Bad as all this was, Mrs. White’s failed predictions about the return of Christ were not her worst problem. Those could be handled. James could work his editorial magic on the text of the original visions. If anyone continued to question why her prophecies regarding Christ’s return had failed, the blame could be shifted over to the Adventist people, who had failed to accomplish God’s work of warning the world. Perhaps the most damning of all charges against her was the allegation that she had seen a false teaching in vision. In the next chapter we will be examining the false teaching known as the “shut door”...

3

The Shut Door Prophetess

When Christ failed to return as planned on October 22, 1844, the followers of William Miller were thrown into great confusion. Over the subsequent months most of the Millerites returned to their churches. However, there were others who were too ashamed to admit their error or felt too humiliated to return. Some felt that their old churches had treated them with an unchristian spirit and they preferred to worship with those who had experienced a similar journey. Many began meeting together, often in homes or rented halls. These people were known as “Adventists” and it was among these people that the “shut door” teaching developed.

The “shut door” teaching is based upon the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25. According to the parable, the messengers of the Bridegroom cry out at midnight that the Bridegroom, who represents Jesus, is coming to the marriage feast (Matt. 25:6). After the disappointment, many Adventists believed that the 1844 movement announcing Christ’s return represented the *midnight cry* of Matthew 25. The shut door followers taught that the Bridegroom came to the “marriage supper” on October 22, 1844:

And while they [foolish virgins] went to buy, the Bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with Him to the marriage; and **the door was shut**.
(Matt. 25:10)

They taught this verse was fulfilled on October 22, 1844, when Christ arose in the heavenly sanctuary and moved from the Holy Place into the Most Holy Place. In so doing, Christ shut the door of salvation to all except the “wise virgins,” those Advent believers who had prepared for Christ’s second coming by participating in William Miller’s 1844 movement. They believed Jesus was now “shut in” with His special people, preparing and purifying them through a series of tests and trials so that they would be worthy to receive His kingdom. They believed that since October 22, 1844, Christ was ministering only to *Israel*—the Adventist believers. They taught that Christ was testing His children on certain points of truth, such as the Sabbath, and that their work for the salvation of lost souls was finished.

At first, William Miller himself taught the shut door doctrine, as shown in the article he wrote in December of 1844:

“We have done our work in warning sinners and in trying to awake a formal church. God in his providence has shut the door; we can only stir up one another to be patient.”³⁶

On February 19, 1845, Miller expressed his belief that no sinners had been converted on the earth during the last five months: “I have not seen a genuine conversion since [Oct. 22, 1844].”³⁷

Adventist minister Gilbert Cranmer recalls how rigidly the shut door doctrine was enforced in the early days:

“They taught that Jesus rose up and **shut the door** of the Holy Place and opened the door into the Most Holy. Many also believed and taught that the door

of mercy was closed against sinners in 1844. In fact, the position taken by the body of Advent believers in 1844, William Miller included, was that the work for the world was finished, that there was no salvation for sinners after 1844. **So firmly was this believed that some who had a desire to unite with the body of Advent believers, who had not been in the '44 move, were rejected.**³⁸

Thus, some Christians who desired to join the Adventists were rejected because the Adventists believed the door of salvation was shut. However, it soon became evident to most that the doctrine was flawed. By the end of 1848, nearly all of the shut door believers, including William Miller, had given up this teaching.

Nevertheless, there were a few Adventists who persisted in the shut door doctrine. Joseph Bates was a vociferous believer in the shut door. Based upon his prophetic calculations, he believed there would be a seven-year period during which Christ would test His children on the Sabbath question. He believed that period began in 1844 and would culminate in 1851, with the return of Christ. In 1847 Bates describes how the door of salvation was closed for *Gentiles* (non-Adventists) in 1844:

“Paul’s open door, then, was the preaching the gospel with effect to the Gentiles. Now let this door be shut, and the preaching of this gospel will have no effect. This is just what we say is the fact. **The gospel message ended at the appointed time with the closing of the 2,300 days [in 1844];** and almost every honest believer that is watching the signs of the times will admit it.”³⁹

Like Bates, James and Ellen White were ardent advocates of the shut door doctrine. As early as 1845, Ellen received visions showing that the door of salvation was shut. Lucinda Burdick, a young lady from Maine who was about the same age as Ellen, describes how she came to know the young prophetess:

“I first heard of Miss Ellen G. Harmon (afterwards Mrs. Ellen G. White) in the early winter (Jan. or Feb.) of 1845, when my uncle Josiah Little came to my father’s house and reported that he had seen one Ellen Harmon in the act of having visions which she claimed were given her of God. He said that she declares that God revealed to her that the door of mercy was closed forever, and that there was henceforth no salvation for sinners. This caused me great uneasiness and anguish of mind for I had not been baptized and my youthful heart was much disturbed as to my salvation if the door of mercy was really closed.”⁴⁰

Learning that the door of salvation was shut to sinners must have been quite distressing to the young Lucinda. She recalls further frightening experiences with the prophetess:

“Ellen was having what was called visions: said God had shown her in vision that Jesus Christ arose on the tenth day of the seventh month, 1844, and shut the door of mercy; had left forever the mediatorial throne; the whole world was doomed and lost, and there never could be another sinner saved.”⁴¹

Hence we find that Ellen’s visions taught her followers to believe the whole world was lost, and the door of

salvation was shut. Ellen's message to her followers was that no work remained to be done for non-Adventists. Adventist minister Isaac Wellcome recalls hearing her relate this message in vision in 1845:

"I was often in meeting with Ellen G. Harmon and James White in 1844 and '45. I several times caught her while falling to the floor,—at times when she swooned away for a vision. I have heard her relate her visions of these dates. Several were published on sheets, to the effect that all were lost who did not endorse the '44 move, that Christ had left the throne of mercy, and all were sealed that ever would be, and no others could repent. She and James taught this one or two years. Recently, in her published visions, called 'Testimony,' her visions differ widely, and directly contradict flatly her former ones."⁴²

Adventist minister Gilbert Cranmer recalls how Ellen White had seen the shut door in her visions:

"The 'shut-door' doctrine formed a part of the doctrine of the church; that is, **Mrs. White had seen in vision that the day of salvation for sinners was past**, and those that fully believed in her visions as coming from God, also accepted that doctrine."⁴³

Thus we can see that Ellen's visions were instrumental in convincing other Adventists to accept the shut door of salvation doctrine. In early 1846 Ellen describes one experience where her visions helped convince doubting souls that the door of salvation for the lost was indeed shut:

"While in Exeter, Maine, in meeting with Israel Dammon, James, and many others, many of them did not believe in a shut door. I suffered much at the commencement of the meeting. Unbelief seemed to be on every hand. There was one sister there that was called very spiritual. She had traveled and been a powerful preacher the most of the time for twenty years. She had been truly a mother in Israel. But a division had risen in the band on the shut door. She had great sympathy, and could not believe the door was shut. (I had known nothing of their differences.) Sister Durben got up to talk. I felt very, very sad. At length my soul seemed to be in an agony, and while she was talking I fell from my chair to the floor. It was then I had a view of Jesus rising from His mediatorial throne and going to the Holiest as Bridegroom to receive His kingdom. They were all deeply interested in the view. They all said it was entirely new to them. The Lord worked in mighty power setting the truth home to their hearts. Sister Durben knew what the power of the Lord was, for she had felt it many times; and a short time after I fell she was struck down, and fell to the floor, crying to God to have mercy on her. When I came out of vision, my ears were saluted with Sister Durben's singing and shouting with a loud voice. **Most of them received the vision, and were settled upon the shut door.**"⁴⁴

Her visions may have convinced Sister Durben and others present at the meeting that the door of salvation was shut, but others were still unconvinced. The Whites began traveling around the region in an effort to convince other Adventists, such as Brother Stowell, that the door of salvation was shut. Ellen relates this experience:

“The first Sabbath we spent in Topsham [March 24] was a sweet, interesting time. It seemed that Jesus Himself passed through our midst and shed His light and glory upon us. We all had a rich draught from the well of Bethlehem. The Spirit came upon me and I was taken off in vision. I saw many important things, some of which I will write you before I close this letter. I saw Brother Stowell, of Paris, was wavering upon the shut door. I felt that I must visit them. Although it was fifty miles off and very bad going, I believed God would strengthen me to perform the journey. We went and found they needed strengthening. There had not been a meeting in the place for above two years. We spent one week with them. Our meetings were very interesting. They were hungry for present truth. We had free, powerful meetings with them. God gave me two visions while there, much to the comfort and strength of the brethren and sisters. **Brother Stowell was established in the shut door** and all the present truth he had doubted.”⁴⁵

The efforts of the Whites to establish the shut door doctrine were noted by other Adventists. One devoted follower of Sister White, a shut door advocate named Otis Nichols, wrote to William Miller in April of 1846 commending Sister White for the visions God was giving her on the shut door of salvation:

“Her message was always attended with the Holy Ghost, and wherever it was received as from the Lord it broke down and melted their hearts like little children, fed, comforted, strengthened the weak, and encouraged them to hold on to the faith, and the

seventh month movement; and that **our work was done for the nominal church and the world, and what remained to be done was for the household of faith.**”⁴⁶

Ellen had some of her shut door visions in the home of an Adventist named John Megquier, who lived in Poland, Maine. He shares his eyewitness account:

“We well know the course of Ellen G. White, the visionist, while in the State of Maine. About the first visions that she had were at my house in Poland. She said God had told her in vision that the door of mercy had closed, and there was no more chance for the world, and she would tell who had got spots on their garments; and those spots were got on by questioning her visions, whether they were of the Lord or not. Then she would tell them what to do, or what duty to perform, to get into favor with God again. Then God would show her, through a vision, who was lost, and who was saved in different parts of the State, according as they received or rejected her visions.”⁴⁷

Once again we find Mrs. White predicting who was lost and who was saved based upon their receptiveness to her visions. After a while, the Whites felt that simply going from town to town preaching the shut door was not sufficient. In 1847 James published a paper entitled “A Word to the Little Flock” in which he and Ellen promoted their shut door doctrine. In this publication Ellen describes an amazing vision she received from God:

“While praying at the family altar, the Holy Ghost fell on me, and I seemed to be rising higher and

higher, far above the dark world. I turned to look for the Advent people in the world, but could not find them--when a voice said to me, 'Look again, and look a little higher.' At this I raised my eyes and saw a straight and narrow path, cast up high above the world. On this path the Advent people were traveling to the City, which was at the farther end of the path. They had a bright light set up behind them at the first end of the path, which an angel told me was the Midnight Cry. This light shone all along the path, and gave light for their feet so they might not stumble. And if they kept their eyes fixed on Jesus, who was just before them, leading them to the City, they were safe. But soon some grew weary, and they said the City was a great way off, and they expected to have entered it before. Then Jesus would encourage them by raising his glorious right arm, and from his arm came a glorious light which waved over the Advent band, and they shouted Hallelujah! Others rashly denied the light behind them, and said that it was not God that had led them out so far. The light behind them went out leaving their feet in perfect darkness, and they stumbled and got their eyes off the mark and lost sight of Jesus, and fell off the path down in the dark and wicked world below. **It was just as impossible for them to get on the path again and go to the City, as all the wicked world which God had rejected.**"⁴⁸

According to this vision, the fallen Adventists could not regain the path to heaven because the door of salvation was shut. Like the "wicked world which God had rejected," fallen Adventists had no further hope of salvation. James added his thoughts on the shut door in the same paper:

"Jesus is clearly represented in the bible, in his different characters, offices, and works. At the crucifixion he was the meek, slain lamb. From the ascension, to the shutting of the door, Oct. 1844, Jesus stood with wide-spread arms of love, and mercy; ready to receive, and plead the cause of every sinner, who would come to God by him. On the 10th day of the 7th month, 1844, he passed into the Holy of Holies, where he has since been a merciful 'high priest over the house of God.'"⁴⁹

While James and Ellen continued to teach that Jesus was no longer pleading the cause of sinners during 1847, the tide was beginning to turn against the doctrine. By the end of 1848 most Adventists realized it was in error and discarded the teaching. Meanwhile, God's prophetess was not about to give up on the doctrine. This was the message God had given her to preach and she was not about to relinquish it in spite of its fading popularity. Should prophets change their message just because it is unpopular? Of course not! Thus, the Whites and Bates continued to trumpet the shut door teaching. In fact, James started a new monthly magazine entitled *Present Truth*. The shut door doctrine received prominent attention in this magazine nearly every month of its short-lived publication.

The fall of 1849 marked nearly five years that the shut door Adventists had refused to work for the salvation of the lost. Former SDA minister W.H. Brinkerhoff recounts this sad history:

"For a number of years after 1844, S.D. Adventists, acting consistently with their theory, would not labor for the salvation of sinners, notwithstanding they had, as they claim, the gift of prophecy in the church for the correction of error, and it was only when circumstances compelled them to admit the

possibility of others besides '44 Adventists being saved, that they yielded the point of the 'tight' shut door..."⁵⁰

It is painful to imagine how many lost souls never heard the gospel during this time period. How many people could have been brought to Christ? After enduring five years of shut door dogma some were probably wondering when the angels were going to tap Ellen on the shoulder and tell her that the shut door teaching was fiction. On the contrary, however, the angels were reemphasizing to her that the day of salvation for sinners was over. In August Ellen shared with the readers of *Present Truth* what her accompanying angel told her:

"My accompanying angel bade me look for the travail of soul for sinners as used to be. I looked, but could not see it; for the time for their salvation is past."⁵¹

While other Christians (those whom the Whites referred to as *Babylon* and the *Synagogue of Satan*) were fulfilling Christ's commission to spread the gospel to lost souls, the shut door Adventists felt no "travail of soul for sinners." However, by early 1850 the shut door Adventists were facing a dilemma. Their doctrine was floundering and they were having difficulty attracting new adherents. According to Bates' understanding of prophecy, Jesus was scheduled to return in the fall of 1851 and they only had about eighteen months to get ready! The troubling aspect of all this was that their followers numbered in the hundreds and they needed 144,000 by autumn of next year. What were they going to do? Perhaps they had shut the door too tightly!

In early 1850 the first signs appeared that the shut door was beginning to crack open. In a letter written to some

friends in February, Mrs. White announced some new converts to the Advent message:

"Souls are coming out upon the truth all around here. They are those who have not heard the Advent doctrine and some of them are those who went forth to meet the Bridegroom in 1844, but since that time have been deceived by false shepherds until they did not know where they were or what they believed."⁵²

Here we find the first indication that those who were not part of the 1844 movement could be saved. Of course Mrs. White is careful to mention that these people were Christians who had never heard the Advent doctrine. There was still no hope for the non-Christians and those Christians who had rejected Miller's 1844 time-setting message.

In April of 1850 the shut door cracked open a little further to allow the children of the saints to enter. Nearly six years had elapsed since the Great Disappointment, and many children had been born during this time period. Could these children be saved since they were not part of the 1844 movement? The matter was decided in *Present Truth* magazine:

"As they [little children] were then [1844] in a state of innocence, they were entitled to a record upon the breastplate of judgment as much as those who had sinned and received pardon; and are, therefore subjects of the present intercession of our great high priest."⁵³

Throughout 1850, James White continued to promote the shut door message in his magazine. Despite the rising

unpopularity of the shut door message, James and Ellen were determined to keep promoting it. In May James wrote:

“But the sinner, to whom Jesus had stretched out his arms all the day long, and who had rejected the offers of salvation, was left without an advocate, when Jesus passed from the Holy Place, and shut that door in 1844.”⁵⁴

Finally, near the end of 1850 the shut door cracked open a little further. The shut door was opened just wide enough to let Herman Churchill slide in. Churchill was unconverted in 1844. Churchill’s decision to join the Adventist believers in August of 1850 caused quite a stir among the shut door believers. James wrote about the event in a letter:

“One brother [Herman Churchill], who had not been in the Advent, and had made no public profession of religion until 1845, came out clear and strong on the whole truth. He had never opposed the Advent, and it is evident that the Lord had been leading him, though his experience had not been just like ours. Such, who come into the truth at the eleventh hour, may expect great trials.”⁵⁵

Nearly six years after the Great Disappointment the Adventists had made their first convert who was a non-Christian in 1844. They were surprised that someone who was not a part of the 1844 movement would be interested in joining them. General Conference president George Butler, writing in the April 7, 1885, *Review and Herald*, recalls the startling nature of Herman Churchill’s decision:

“His was one of the very first cases of conversion from the world to the present truth, which occurred

after 1844. . . . I remember him well as he came to Waterbury, Vermont, and attended meetings in my father’s house, where a few met from time to time. They were quite surprised at first that one who had been an unbeliever should manifest an interest in the Advent doctrine. He was not repulsed but welcomed. He was earnest and zealous, and as they discerned in him sincerity, they accepted him as a true convert.”⁵⁶

As the year of 1851 progressed, it was more and more apparent to all that Christ was not going to return in the fall. The expected signs were not happening and people were undoubtedly growing weary of hearing predictions about Christ’s soon coming. They were also growing weary of the shut door teaching. After nearly seven years, James and Ellen reluctantly gave up this doctrine. An angel did not tell them their error. Ellen did not receive a vision showing their mistake. Time itself had killed the doctrine. It simply did not make sense any more.

Discarding the shut door doctrine put Ellen White in the position that every prophet hates to be in. How do you explain to your followers that your visions were wrong? The people were expecting a prophet to correct false teachings not endorse them! As a result, for the next few years, Mrs. White was strangely quiet. Fortunately for the Whites, the damage was limited in scope. It is unlikely that more than a few thousand people had even heard of Ellen White. Perhaps this was a wound that time would heal. Moving to a new location and a new field of labor seemed to be in order since their influence had been irreparably damaged in the northeast. By the mid-1850s the Whites had relocated to Michigan, where they focussed their efforts on the mid-western United States. Lucinda Burdick writes about their loss of influence in the New England area:

“Soon after this both confidence and interest in this fanatical couple vanished as the visions were not only childish and devoid of sense, but absolutely contradictory. Their influence and field of labor in Maine being lost they soon went out West where they succeeded in creating considerable interest and a large following through their sabbatarian teaching.”⁵⁷

James set out immediately to restore Ellen’s image. He began what was to become a lifelong task for him—revising his wife’s prophetic writings. James went through all of his wife’s articles and deleted the objectionable parts dealing with the shut door doctrine. He scrapped the *Present Truth* magazine, which some had come to believe was anything but present truth. He then started a new magazine entitled the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*. He reprinted the “revised” version of his wife’s visions in 1851 in a 64-page pamphlet named “Experience and Views.”

While James was apparently unfazed about deleting the writings of a prophet of God, not all the brethren were so pleased. When the new pamphlet came out with 19 percent of the original text missing, a crisis threatened to explode. As you can imagine, some of the members of the tiny church were aghast over the exclusion of whole visions, which they believed came directly from God. Some of the brethren called for a meeting with James. Mrs. White describes how James defused this dangerous crisis:

“At one time in the early days of the message, Father Butler and Elder Hart became confused in regard to the testimonies. In great distress they groaned and wept, but for some time they would not

give the reasons for their perplexity. However, being pressed to give a reason for their faithless speech and manner, Elder Hart referred to a small pamphlet that had been published as the visions of Sister White, and said that to his certain knowledge, some visions were not included. Before a large audience, these brethren both talked strongly about their losing confidence in the work.

“My husband handed the little pamphlet to Elder Hart, and requested him to read what was printed on the title page. ‘A Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Mrs. E. G. White,’ he read.

“For a moment there was silence, and then my husband explained that we had been very short of means, and were able to print at first only a small pamphlet, and he promised the brethren that when sufficient means was raised, the visions should be published more fully in book form.

“Elder Butler was deeply moved, and after the explanation had been made, he said, ‘Let us bow before God.’ Prayers, weeping, and confessions followed, such as we have seldom heard. Father Butler said: ‘Brother White, forgive me; **I was afraid you were concealing from us some of the light we ought to have.** Forgive me, Sister White.’ Then the power of God came into the meeting in a wonderful manner.”⁵⁸

James performed a masterstroke which turned a disaster into a small victory. Not only did he manage to explain away the deletions, but he also managed to throw the responsibility for the deletions back upon the brethren for not providing him with enough money to fund the project!

Brother Butler had been concerned that the “light of heaven” was being concealed. He learned a lesson that day

that many would later learn. When James White would edit and delete parts of Mrs. White's writings he was not concealing the "light of heaven." Rather, he was concealing errors and mistakes, which if pondered would lead people to question whether his wife was actually a prophet.

We do not know how much money James collected that day for the republishing of the entire work. However, we do know that in later years the Whites were in dramatically improved financial standing. Did James ever keep his promise to print the entire visions when more money became available? Despite his improved finances, James never reprinted the material. Gradually the visions were forgotten as relics of the past. The shut door was whited out from church history and the subject was rarely brought up after the early 1850s. The shut door doctrine might have rested in the graveyard of silence forever had it not been for the events of the 1880s.

The *Early Writings* Fiasco

Thirty years later, the wounds of the shut door had almost been healed. Ellen White's articles in *A Word to the Little Flock* and *Present Truth* had long since vanished, and very few Adventists were even aware of their existence. Most Adventists had no idea their prophet had promoted a false teaching through her visions. However, the shut door wounds continued to be a source of irritation from time to time.

In 1866 two Adventist ministers in Iowa, B.F. Snook and W.H. Brinkerhoff, printed some of Mrs. White's questionable statements and visions in a book. This brought to the forefront an issue that was beginning to fade from memory. Many Adventists who were a part of the 1844 Movement were able to recall the events of the shut door. Adventist W. Phelps asked the rhetorical question:

"Now I ask in all candor: Who that was an adventist in 1844 does not know that when the time passed, it then became the faith of the great mass of adventists that **probation was over, that the Salvation of sinners was past; and some held the same view as late as 1852; and that vision on the shut door was in harmony with that view?**"⁵⁹

The ensuing controversy over Ellen White and her visions led to a split in the church in Iowa, but the Whites blasted Snook and Brinkerhoff and this storm eventually passed over. Nevertheless, for many years there were rumblings in the church about the suppressed writings of Ellen White.

In the early 1880s General Conference president George Butler was anxious to put those rumblings to rest. Adventist minister D.M. Canright relates how Butler approached him and James White about republishing Mrs. White's earliest writings:

"At that time Butler was president of the General Conference, president of the Publishing Association, etc. One day in 1880 he came into the office where Elder Smith and myself were. In high glee he said: 'Those Western rebels say we have suppressed some of Sister White's earliest visions. I will stop their mouths, for I am going to republish all she ever wrote in those early visions.' Elder White leaned forward, dropped his voice low, and said: 'Butler, you better go a little slow.' That was all. I did not understand what his warning meant, nor did Butler. Soon Elder White died—in August, 1881. Butler then went ahead, and in 1882 issued the present edition of *Early Writings*."⁶⁰

Despite the warning from James, Butler went ahead and published *Early Writings* to silence the critics of Ellen

White. After the book was published, Butler wrote an article announcing it:

“These were the very first of the published writings of Sister White. . . Many have greatly desired to have in their possession ALL she has written for publication. . . So strong was the interest to have these early writings reproduced that several years ago the General Conference recommended by vote that they be republished. The volume under consideration is the result of this interest. It meets a long felt want. . . There is another interesting feature connected with this matter. The enemies of this cause, who have spared no pains to break down the faith of our people in the testimonies of God’s Spirit and the interest felt in the writings of Sister White, have made all the capital possible from the fact that her early writings were not attainable. They have said many things about our ‘suppressing’ these writings, as if we were ashamed of them. Some have striven to make it appear that there was something objectionable about them, that we feared would come to the light of day, and that we carefully kept them in the background. These lying insinuations have answered their purpose in deceiving some unwary souls. They now appear in their real character, by the publication of several thousand copies of this ‘suppressed’ book, which our enemies pretended we were very anxious to conceal. They have claimed to be very anxious to obtain these writings to show their supposed error. They now have the opportunity.”⁶¹

There is no doubt the whole purpose of the publication was to silence Ellen White’s critics. In the preface the

publishers assure us that these are indeed the earliest writings of Mrs. White:

“A widespread interest has arisen in all her works, especially in these early views, and the call for the publication of a second edition has become imperative.” “No portion of the work has been omitted. No shadow of change has been made in any idea or sentiment of the original work; and the verbal changes have been made under the author’s own eye and with her full approval.”⁶²

Rather than silence the critics, the book resulted in a firestorm of controversy. Immediately after *Early Writings* was published Elder A.C. Long published a tract of sixteen pages entitled “Comparison of the Early Writings of Mrs. White with Later Publications.” In that publication Elder Long showed line by line where parts of Mrs. White’s writings were deleted. In reality, *Early Writings* consisted of Ellen White’s writings from the pamphlet published by James in 1851 entitled “Experience and Views.” This 1851 publication did **not** have *earliest* writings of Ellen White. The 1851 publication did not have any of the damaging statements about the shut door. In actuality, the earliest writings were written in 1845 and published in the 1846 *DayStar* paper. Other early writings appeared in *A Word to the Little Flock* and the articles of *Present Truth* published between 1847 and 1850.

One example cited by Elder Long is found on page 14 of *Early Writings*. In this example we find one of Ellen White’s most famous visions with a sentence missing (noted in brackets below):

“While I was praying at the family altar, the Holy Ghost fell upon me, and I seemed to be rising higher

and higher, far above the dark world...I raised my eyes, and saw a straight and narrow path, cast up high above the world. On this path the Advent people were traveling to the city, which was at the farther end of the path. They had a bright light set up behind them at the beginning of the path, which an angel told me was the midnight cry. This light shone all along the path and gave light for their feet so that they might not stumble. If they kept their eyes fixed on Jesus, who was just before them, leading them to the city, they were safe. But soon some...rashly denied the light behind them and said that it was not God that had led them out so far. The light behind them went out, leaving their feet in perfect darkness, and they stumbled and lost sight of the mark and of Jesus, and fell off the path down into the dark and wicked world below. **[It was just as impossible for them to get on the path again and go to the City, as all the wicked world which God had rejected.]** Soon we heard the voice of God like many waters...”

The reason why these lines were suppressed is obvious. They teach a shut door doctrine that the church discarded 30 years earlier. After Elder Long published his tract Butler probably realized why James White had told him to go slowly. Even though church leaders were now aware that *Early Writings* was not really Mrs. White’s earliest writings, they did not retract the book. In fact, the book is still available today.

The controversy finally reached Mrs. White, and in an attempt to explain her shut door statements, she wrote the following in 1884:

“For a time after the disappointment in 1844 I did hold, in common with the advent body, that the door of mercy was then forever closed to the world. This position was taken before my first vision was given me. It was the light given me of God that corrected our error, and enabled us to see the true position.”⁶³

While admitting she made a mistake, Mrs. White tried to make it appear that her visions from God corrected the error. What she failed to mention was that she held the belief for nearly seven years and taught it to others based upon her visions.

As devastating as this may appear, the most startling discovery about Mrs. White’s early days was yet to be made. Over 100 years after *Early Writings* was published a Seventh-day Adventist seminary student made what has been described as the Adventist historical discovery of the century. It was a shocking discovery regarding Ellen White’s early associate Israel Dammon...

4

The Israel Dammon Trial

It was the Seventh-day Adventist historical discovery of the century. However, some Adventist leaders probably wish that it had never been made. In March of 1986, Andrews University Seminary graduate student Bruce Weaver located a newspaper account of the arrest and trial of one of Ellen White's friends, Israel Dammon. What he unearthed would turn out to be an eye-opening shocker for Ellen White devotees.

Bruce quickly noted that the newspaper account of the incident varied widely from Mrs. White's account. Why the differences? In order to understand, we must travel back in time to 1845.

The Great Disappointment is only a few months in the past. Religious confusion, fanaticism, and excitement are running rampant among the Millerites. Religious services among the Adventists are almost exclusively held in private homes. Meetings typically include such phenomena as "the 'holy' salutation kiss, loud shouting and singing, physical prostrations, promiscuous (mixed) footwashing, multiple baptisms by immersion, odd exhibitions of voluntary humility (i.e. crawling, barking), and the presentations of a few (mostly female) visionaries."⁶⁴

On Saturday, February 16, Ellen Harmon arrives in town fresh from the meeting in Exeter, Maine, where her visions successfully convinced Sister Durben to accept the shut door doctrine. On this brisk Saturday evening, a meeting of

Adventist believers is being held at the Ayer household in Atkinson, Maine. The meeting is being led by former sea captain Israel Dammon and features the prophetesses Miss Dorinda Baker of Orrington and Miss Ellen Harmon of Portland. Elder James White is also in attendance. Perhaps one of the most vivid eyewitness descriptions of the meeting comes from William Crosby, a 37-year-old attorney who described it under oath in court two days later:

"They would at times all be talking at once, hallooing at the top of their voices... A woman on the floor lay on her back with a pillow under her head; she would occasionally arouse up and tell a vision which she said was revealed to her... By spells it was the most noisy assembly I ever attended—there was no order or regularity, nor anything that resembled any other meeting I ever attended..."⁶⁵

Deacon James Rowe added his sworn testimony regarding the chaotic meeting:

"I was at Ayer's a short time last Saturday evening... I have been young, and now am old, and of all the places I ever was in, I never saw such a confusion, not even in a drunken frolic."⁶⁶

The prophetesses were a central part of the service that evening. Loton Lambert, an eyewitness to the meeting, gave the following testimony in court under oath:

"They were singing when I arrived—after singing they sat down on the floor—Dammon said a sister had a vision to relate—a woman on the floor then

related her vision. Dammon said all other denominations were wicked—they were liars, whoremasters, murderers, etc.; he also run [sic] upon all such as were not believers with him. He ordered us off—we did not go. The woman that lay on the floor relating visions, was called by Elder Dammon and others, *Imitation of Christ*. Dammon called us hogs and devils, and said if he was the owner of the house he would drive us off—the one that they called *Imitation of Christ*, told Mrs. Woodbury and others, that they must forsake all their friends or go to hell. *Imitation of Christ*, as they called her, would lay on the floor a while, then rise up and call upon some one and say she had a vision to relate to them, which she would relate; there was one girl that they said must be baptized that night or she must go to hell; she wept bitterly and wanted to see her mother first; they told her she must leave her mother or go to hell—one voice said, let her go to hell. She finally concluded to be baptized. *Imitation of Christ* told her vision to a cousin of mine, that she must be baptized that night or go to hell—she objected, because she had once been baptized. *Imitation of Christ* was said to be a woman from Portland.”⁶⁷

The visionary “woman from Portland,” the one referred to by Lambert as the *Imitation of Christ*, is thus identified as Ellen Harmon—the other prophetess being from Orrington. The owner of the home, James Ayer, later confirmed in court that the visionary whom Lambert referred to as the “*Imitation of Christ*” was indeed Ellen Harmon:

“Saw the woman with a pillow under her head—her name is Miss Ellen Harmon, of Portland. I heard nothing said by her or others about *Imitation of Christ*.”⁶⁸

Like Ellen Harmon, the other aspiring young prophetess present, Dorinda Baker of Orrington, was in poor physical health. She was described in court by witness Joshua Burnham:

“I have known Miss Dorinda Baker from five years of age—her character is good—she is now twenty-three or twenty-four years of age. She is a sickly girl, her father has expended \$1,000 in doctoring her. I was at the meeting Saturday night—it was appointed for the lady to tell her visions.”⁶⁹

The meeting’s riotous atmosphere caused such a civil disturbance in the neighborhood that authorities were finally called in to break it up. Mrs. White gives her account of what happens when the sheriff arrives to arrest Dammon:

“...while I was speaking, two men looked into the window. We were satisfied of their object. They entered and rushed past me to Elder Damman [sic]. The Spirit of the Lord rested upon him, and his strength was taken away, and he fell to the floor helpless. The officer cried out, ‘In the name of the State of Maine, lay hold of this man.’ Two seized his arms, and two his feet, and attempted to drag him from the room. They would move him a few inches only, and then rush out of the house. The power of God was in that room, and the servants of God with their countenances lighted up with his

glory, made no resistance. The efforts to take Elder D. were often repeated with the same effect. The men could not endure the power of God, and it was a relief to them to rush out of the house. Their number increased to twelve, still Elder D. was held by the power of God about forty minutes, and not all the strength of those men could move him from the floor where he lay helpless. At the same moment we all felt that Elder D. must go; that God had manifested his power for his glory, and that the name of the Lord would be further glorified in suffering him to be taken from our midst. And those men took him up as easily as they would take up a child, and carried him out.”⁷⁰

Mrs. White’s description of the event is very awe-inspiring, indicating a profound and remarkable supernatural intervention by God. However, her account differs widely from the sworn court testimony of the eyewitnesses recorded in the town’s newspaper, the *Piscataquis Farmer*. Now, contrast Mrs. White’s account with that of Joseph Moulton, the sheriff in charge of arresting Dammon. Here he describes the arrest in court under oath:

“When I went to arrest prisoner, they shut the door against me. Finding I could not gain access to him without, I burst open the door. I went to the prisoner and took him by the hand and told him my business. A number of women jumped on to him—he clung to them, and they to him. So great was the resistance, that I with three assistants, could not get him out. I remained in the house and sent for more help; after they arrived we made a second attempt with the same result—I again sent for more help—

after they arrived we overpowered them and got him out door in custody. We were resisted by both men and women. Can’t describe the place—**it was one continued shout.**”⁷¹

Moulton’s sworn court testimony contrasts sharply with Ellen White’s tale. Moulton clearly indicates Dammon was being held down by human power, by the women and men who jumped to his assistance and helped him resist arrest by holding him down—not the supernatural power of God.

Interestingly enough, not a single one of the other thirty or so witnesses at the trial contradicted Moulton’s testimony about women and men aiding Dammon in resisting arrest. Mrs. White’s crucial contradiction of the story casts doubt upon the integrity of what she wrote. Bruce Weaver explains how preposterous it is to suppose that the Sheriff was brave enough or foolhardy enough, to attempt to battle supernatural forces in order to arrest Dammon:

“In fact, if twelve men worked strenuously and unsuccessfully to budge one prone and otherwise unimpeded individual, and if there had been such a powerful but invisible aura in the room that ‘it was a relief to them to rush out of the house’ periodically, normal men would be sufficiently spooked (or converted) by the experience to abandon their mission long before forty minutes had expired.”⁷²

After spending the weekend in jail, Dammon appeared for trial on Monday. Mrs. White picks up the story of Dammon at his trial:

“At the hour of trial Elder D. was present. A lawyer offered his services. The charge brought against Elder D. was, that he was a disturber of the peace. Many witnesses were brought to sustain the charge, but they were at once broken down by the testimony of Elder D’s acquaintances present, who were called to the stand. There was much curiosity to know what Elder D. and his friends believed, and he was asked to give them a synopsis of his faith. He then told them in a clear manner his belief from the Scriptures. It was also suggested that they sung [sic] curious hymns, and he was asked to sing one. There were quite a number of strong brethren present who had stood by him in the trial, and they joined with him in singing, ‘When I was down in Egypt’s land, I heard my Saviour was at hand’.

“Elder D. was asked if he had a spiritual wife. He told them he had a lawful wife, and he could thank God that she had been a very spiritual woman ever since his acquaintance with her. The cost of the court, I think, was thrown upon him, and he was released.”⁷³

The *Piscataquis Farmer* has a somewhat different version of the trial. According to the newspaper, it was Dammon who “asked permission” to sing. During the sentencing phase of the trial, Dammon was permitted to speak in his defense:

“He [Dammon] argued that the day of grace had gone by, that the believers were reduced; but that there was [sic] too many yet, and that the end of the world would come within a week. The Court after consultation sentenced the prisoner to the House of Correction for the space of Ten Days...”⁷⁴

Mrs. White’s account of Dammon’s defense failed to mention that he used the “shut door” and predictions of the imminent return of Christ as part of his defense. The court was apparently unimpressed with his defense or his bizarre beliefs. Rather than releasing him, as Sister White claimed, the court sentenced Dammon to 10 days in jail. Even the most devoted follower of Ellen White can see that her version is, at the very least, factually inaccurate, if not outright deceptive.

One of the most interesting facets of Mrs. White’s fable is what she left out. She said nothing about the loud shouting and singing, the physical prostrations, the exhibitions of voluntary humility (i.e. crawling, barking). These were apparently present in many of the early Adventist meetings. Lucinda Burdick noted these fanatical activities in meetings she attended with the Whites:

“At the time of my first acquaintance with them [Ellen and James White] they were in a wild fanaticism, —used to sit on the floor instead of chairs, and creep around the floor like little children. Such freaks were considered a mark of humility.”⁷⁵

The act of the crawling was practiced by the Adventists to demonstrate their humility. John Doore testified in court that he had “seen both men and women crawl across the floor on their hands and knees.” George S. Woodbury said, “My wife and Dammon passed across the floor on their hands and knees.”

Bruce Weaver explains how this activity was practiced among early Adventists:

“A description of the creeping that took place at the home of Captain John Megquier in Poland, Maine, was provided by a correspondent of the *Norway Advertiser*: ‘They seldom sit in any other position than on the bare floor.... A woman, at the meeting he attended, got on her hands and knees, and crept over the floor like a child. A man, in the same position, followed her, butting her occasionally with his head. Another man threw himself at full length upon his back on the bed, and presently three women crossed him with their bodies.’”⁷⁶

Imagine this outrageous scene which took place at the home of John Megquier—a home where Ellen Harmon received some of her first visions! A woman crawls across the floor on her hands and knees, and a man crawls behind her, occasionally hitting his head against her rear side! Then we find three women lying across a man’s body! And they called this a religious service where God was communicating to them via prophetic utterances?

Fanaticism, such as “holy kissing” and “promiscuous” foot-washing, was such a problem among the Millerites, that leader Joshua Himes cried out against the Millerites who “live in continual association in exciting, and social meetings,” degenerating into “fleshly and selfish passions.”⁷⁷

Not surprisingly, by 1894 Mrs. White seems to have changed her position on the unusual activities practiced among the early Adventists:

“Every part of the service of Christ will be characterized by decorum and reverence. The truth of Christ cannot be confined to a certain range, yet it will be active to create for its environment, manners and habits and practices that will be in harmony

with its Author. Everything will be done decently and in order. Wild methods and strange freaks and confusion are not authorized by the God of order.”^{78,79}

One could certainly question whether the activities in the Dammon home were “authorized by the God of order.”

Another activity left unmentioned by Mrs. White was the loud shouting and singing. According to the court testimony of Adventist defense witness Joel Doore, “There was not one tenth part of the noise Saturday evening, that there generally is at the meetings I attend.”⁸⁰ It is apparent that in her early career Mrs. White felt shouting to be an effective method of fighting the devil. In 1850 she wrote, “Singing, I saw, often drove away the enemy and shouting would beat him back.”⁸¹ By 1900, however, Mrs. White seemed to have acquired a different view of noisy meetings, even going so far as to claim that she was the one opposing such noise:

“I bore my testimony, declaring that these fanatical movements, this din and noise, were inspired by the spirit of Satan, who was working miracles to deceive if possible the very elect.”⁸²

Once again Mrs. White’s own testimony reveals that it was the spirit of Satan, not God, that dwelled in these noisy, fanatical meetings.

Mrs. White’s account of the arrest and trial of Dammon was published in 1860 in the book *Spiritual Gifts*. When this book was republished in 1877 under the title *Spirit of Prophecy*, the Dammon incident was strangely absent. Like many of her earlier writings, this story simply disappeared without explanation. Why would James and Ellen choose

not to print such an awe-inspiring account of supernatural intervention? Perhaps it was former Adventist minister Isaac Wellcome's publication of his book *World's Crisis* in 1874 that influenced the decision to allow the story to disappear. In *World's Crisis* a reformed Israel Dammon relates his relationship with the Whites. He explains how he lost faith in Ellen White by the end of 1846 and discarded his belief in the shut door:

"We were formerly acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. White, and for a time had confidence in her visions, but for a good many years have had none at all. When we saw that they conflicted one with another, we renounced them altogether, and betook ourselves to the word of the Lord.

"It has been some twenty years or more since we were associated with Mrs. W.; but we remember very perfectly that her first visions or vision was told both by herself and others (especially by Mrs. W.) in connection with the preaching of the 'shut door,' and went to substantiate the same. While under that influence, and preaching the visions, she, in vision, saw N. G. Reed and I. Dammon, in the kingdom in an immortal state, and crowned. After that, she saw them finally lost. How could both be true? I think one was just as true as the other, and that God never told her any such thing."⁸³

Perhaps it was better to let the Dammon story disappear. The story made Dammon appear to be God's hero. Now God's hero had come out in print in opposition to the prophetess. This was not a flattering position for God's prophet to find herself in. It might be difficult for Ellen to explain how, through vision, she saw Dammon in heaven, then later saw him lost. Keeping the Dammon story in print

may raise too many thorny questions. By the late 1800s it had become an all-too-frequent pattern for Mrs. White's questionable earlier writings to disappear from later republications of the same works. An increasingly educated and diverse church membership was not as likely to be impressed with such an outlandish tale as the Israel Dammon story.

The fact that Mrs. White's version of the story, with its dramatic portrayal of supernatural manifestations, differs so widely with the account given in court two days later by 30 witnesses calls into question some of the other supernatural tales that circulate among Adventists. For example, there are narratives of Mrs. White holding up a heavy Bible while in vision, not breathing for hours, and other unusual events. Seventh-day Adventist General Conference president A.G. Daniels, who was personally associated with Mrs. White for over forty years, remarks on those fanciful tales at the 1919 conference on the Spirit of Prophecy:

"For instance, I have heard some ministers preach, and have seen it in writing, that Sister White once carried a heavy Bible—I believe they said it weighed 40 pounds—on her out-stretched hand, and looking up toward the heavens quoted texts and turned the leaves over and pointed to the texts, with her eyes toward the heavens. I do not know whether that was ever done or not. I am not sure. I did not see it, and I do not know that I ever talked with anybody that did see it. But, brethren, I do not count that sort of thing as a very great proof. I do not think that is the best kind of evidence. If I were a stranger in an audience, and heard a preacher enlarging on that, I would have my doubts. That is, I would want to know if he saw it. He would have to say, No, he never did. Then I would ask, 'Did you ever see the

man that did see it?’ And he would have to answer, ‘No, I never did.’ **Well, just how much of that is genuine, and how much has crawled into the story?** I do not know. But I do not think that is the kind of proof we want to use. It has been a long time since I have brought forward this sort of thing, no breath in the body, and the eyes wide open.”

By 1919 it is apparent that the leaders of the Adventist church were ready to bury the whimsical yarns of the early days in the graveyard of the past.

Perhaps another reason to question the supernatural stories about Mrs. White is Dammon himself. Here was a man who witnessed firsthand her visions and other supposed miracles. One would expect that profound prophetic utterances, not breathing for hours, and other physical manifestations would convince the most hardened skeptic. Yet, Dammon turned his back on Ellen White within a matter of a few months. He was one of the first of a long line of men and women who learned something about Ellen White that caused them to doubt her divine inspiration. Perhaps he discovered what Joseph Turner discovered...

5

The Turner Incident

Joseph Turner was a leading figure among the Adventists in 1845. In January, Elder Turner published an article in the *Advent Mirror* advocating his theory that the coming of the Bridegroom had already taken place in heaven, and that Christ had moved “within the veil” in the heavenly sanctuary. Some of the Adventist people looked to Ellen Harmon, in her role of aspiring prophet, for guidance on this issue, and others would not accept a new doctrine without the seal of the “spirit of prophecy.”

Here was an opportunity for the young prophet to make a name for herself. Already Turner’s theory was gaining ground among the Adventists, and an endorsement of his theory would likely give credence to her prophetic abilities. Therefore, in mid-February of 1845, Ellen Harmon claimed to have received a vision revealing the *same truth*. Of course, it would have been more impressive if the vision had come *prior* to Turner’s article; however, it was better late than never. The timing of Ellen’s vision—coming *after* Turner’s article appeared in print—apparently puzzled Adventist pioneer Joseph Bates. So he wrote Ellen a letter regarding this. He was curious. Did Ellen *really* get her teaching from a vision? Or did she get it straight from Joseph Turner’s recently-published article?

By the time Mrs. White got around to writing back to Bates in 1847, the relationship between Turner and the

Whites had soured. Turner had become increasingly fanatical, going so far as to claim Mrs. White's visions were the product of mesmerism. It would have been terribly embarrassing for Mrs. White to admit that one of the Adventist's major doctrines originated with a man who was now condemning her as a false prophet. Therefore, Mrs. White writes back to Bates assuring him the doctrine came straight from God, not through the fanatical Turner:

Brother Bates,

You write in a letter to James something about the Bridegroom's coming, as stated in the first published visions. By the letter you would like to know **whether I had light on the Bridegroom's coming before I saw it in vision.** I can readily answer, No. The Lord showed me the travail of the Advent band and Midnight Cry in December, but He did not show me the Bridegroom's coming until February following.

Perhaps you would like to have me give a statement in relation to both visions. At the time I had the vision of the Midnight Cry I had given it up in the past and thought it future, as also most of the band had. **I know not what time J. Turner got out his paper. I knew he had one out and one was in the house, but I knew not what was in it, for I did not read a word in it.** I had been, and still was very sick. I took no interest in reading, for it injured my head and made me nervous.

After I had the vision and God gave me light, He bade me deliver it to the band, but I shrank from it. I was young, and I thought they would not receive it from me. I disobeyed the Lord, and instead of remaining at home, where the meeting was to be that night, I got in a sleigh in the morning and rode

three or four miles and there I found J. T. [Joseph Turner]. He merely inquired how I was and if I was in the way of my duty. I said nothing, for I knew I was not. I passed up [to the] chamber [bedroom] and did not see him again for two hours, when he came up, asked if I was to be at meeting that night. I told him, No. He said he wanted to hear my vision and thought it duty for me to go home. I told him I should not. He said no more, but went away. I thought, and told those around me, if I went I should have to come out against his views, thinking he believed with the rest. I had not told any of them what God had shown me, and I did not tell them in what I should cut across his track.

All that day I suffered much in body and mind. It seemed that God had forsaken me entirely. I prayed the Lord if He would give me strength to ride home that night, the first opportunity I would deliver the message He had given me. He did give me strength and I rode home that night. Meeting had been done some time, and **not a word was said by any of the family about the meeting.**

Very early next morning J. T. called, said he was in haste going out of the city in a short time, and wanted I should tell him all that God had shown me in vision. It was with fear and trembling I told him all. After I had got through **he said he had told out the same last evening.** I was rejoiced, for I expected he was coming out against me, **for all the while I had not heard anyone say what he believed.**⁸⁴

Notice the facts of this unusual situation. First, Ellen is in Turner's house for at least two hours, and was apparently alone for awhile. She knew Turner's article was in the

house and she had an intense interest in the subject. She had both the time and the opportunity and the incentive to study the article. That evening she arrived home *after* Turner had made his presentation to the group gathered at her parent's home. One would expect that after such an important meeting, everyone in the house would be talking about it. However, Ellen claims her family did not say a single word to her about the subject. Finally, the next day when Ellen relates her *vision* to Turner, he replies that he "told out the same last evening." What a coincidence!

The first obvious question that demands an answer is: Why was Ellen in Turner's house? What possible reason did she have for being there? Why do we find her at Turner's house at a time when one of the most critical new doctrines of the fledgling Adventist church is being formulated?

It is difficult, if not impossible, to believe Ellen did not sneak a peak at Turner's article while she was in his house for over two hours. Furthermore, it seems nearly unbelievable that her own family did not say a single word to her about Turner's presentation in their home a few hours earlier. This was a very important topic of discussion among Adventists at that time. It is hard to believe an important doctrinal presentation could be made in her own home to her own family and friends, and yet none of them said a single word to her about it.

Just as Foy and Ellen had a parting of ways after Foy realized Ellen was preaching *his* visions as her own, the relationship between Turner and Ellen soon went sour. Shortly after this incident, they became bitter enemies, each making accusation against the other. Mrs. White writes:

"Joseph Turner labored with some success to turn my friends and even my relatives against me. Why did he do this? Because I had faithfully related that

which was shown me respecting his unchristian course." *Ellen G. White: The Early Years*, Vol. 1 - 1827-1862, page 87-88

After this incident, Turner became increasingly dubious of Ellen's *inspiration*. After all, he was well aware that she had spent a couple of hours in his home with his article available for reading. He knew he had lectured her family and friends that same evening. It was all too apparent *her vision* was either lifted straight from the pages of his article, or was related to her by her friends and family. Some of her own friends and family apparently agreed with Turner and turned against Ellen. Turner was not the first person to unwittingly furnish Ellen with materials for her visions, nor would he be the last.

After Ellen had adopted Turner's theory that Christ had moved into the Most Holy Place in 1844, and after she came out with a vision from God in support of it, the Adventist believers were stuck with the doctrine. God's prophet had endorsed it, and there was no way they could get rid of it without getting rid of the "spirit of prophecy." The doctrine was controversial to begin with, and lacked definite Biblical proof. For example, Mrs. White said the door to the Most Holy Place was opened up in 1844, while the author of the book of Hebrews said the way to the Most Holy was open in his day.⁸⁵ Many other difficulties with the teaching could be cited, but Ellen White's own statements are best. Perhaps there were many times when Adventist theologians wished they could *white out* her endorsement of a doctrine that has proven to be one of the most controversial doctrines in SDA church history. As the years passed, even Ellen White herself seemed to be confused as to just exactly where Jesus was located.

He's in the Most Holy Place!	No! He's in the Holy Place!
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Then Jesus rose up and shut the door of the holy place, and opened the door into the most holy, and passed within the second veil, where He now stands by the ark , and where the faith of Israel now reaches. <i>Early Writings</i> , p. 42 (1882)	He is today standing at the altar of incense , presenting before God the prayers of those who desire His help. <i>Desire of Ages</i> , p. 568 (1898)
I warn you, Do not place your influence against God's commandments. That law is just as Jehovah wrote it in the temple of heaven. Man may trample upon its copy here below, but the original is kept in the ark of God in heaven; and on the cover of this ark, right above that law, is the mercy seat. Jesus stands right there before that ark to mediate for man (MS 6a, 1886). {1BC 1109.1}	But Jesus alone is my dependence. In Him I trust. He loveth even me. He is at this moment standing at the altar of incense presenting before the Father my prayers, my heart-longing desires for His grace, His heavenly endowment, that I may through the grace given unto me reveal to others His great love and complete efficiency. <i>1888 Materials</i> , p. 865 (1888)

In 1886, according to Manuscript 6a (see above) Jesus was standing in the Most Holy Place. But two years later, in 1888, we find him back in the Holy Place before the altar of incense.⁸⁶ Then a year later, in 1889, Jesus is back “within the veil where he ministers above the ark of God was in the Most Holy Place.”⁸⁷ However, nine years later, **in 1898 we find Jesus ministering by the altar of incense in the Holy Place again!**

When Turner turned against Ellen, he soon found himself the object of some pointed testimonies. He was not the first to suffer the prophet's wrath, nor would he be the last...

6

The Prophet's Wrath

Frequently, ministers and other leading men in the Seventh-day Adventist church would rise up against the “Spirit of Prophecy.” This could not be tolerated. From the earliest days of her career Mrs. White reacted vehemently whenever she was opposed from within the church. During the 1840s, while in vision, she claimed to have seen a number of Adventists in heaven. When these same people openly opposed her visions, she saw them “doomed, damned, and lost for ever, without hope.”⁸⁸

As described in chapter four, Israel Dammon was an early associate of Mrs. White during 1845 and 1846. Dammon soon came to the conviction that he must take his stand upon the “Word of the Lord.” Prior to this decision, Mrs. White had seen Dammon “in the kingdom in an immortal state, and crowned.” After his decision to stand upon the Word of God, she saw Dammon “finally lost.”⁸⁹

Moses Hull

One unfortunate soul who happened to be on the receiving end of Mrs. White's wrath was an Adventist pioneer named Moses Hull. In 1862, Hull started to lose his faith in Adventism. At first, it appears the Whites attempted to reason with Hull. That having failed, Mrs. White resorted to warning him of the dire consequences of the course he had chosen:

If you proceed in the way you have started, misery and woe are before you. God's hand will arrest you in a manner that will not suit you. His wrath will not slumber.⁹⁰

Wow! Such an urgent warning from a prophet of God must have caused Hull to tremble. If he left the Adventists, he could look forward to “misery,” “woe,” and the “wrath” of God Himself! What a frightening prospect! It should have been enough to keep any except the bravest soul inside the church.

Hull, however, was undaunted. He dismissed the prophet's dire warnings. Hull did “proceed the way he had started” and left the Adventist Church. His reason for leaving was quite simple: “Well, I am growing. I have left Adventism, simply because I have outgrown it.”⁹¹ Instead of receiving the wrath of God, Hull lived to a ripe old age, without ever experiencing any of the threatened misery and woe.⁹²

Besides raising questions about her prophetic abilities, this incident should have also raised concern among the Adventist people. What kind of a church needs a prophet to frighten people with the wrath of God to keep them from leaving?

Charles Lee

Adventist minister Charles Lee recalls an eye-opening experience he had with Ellen White. Mr. C. Carlstedt, the editor of the Swedish edition of *Advent Herald*, had become seriously ill with typhoid fever. Charles Lee, James and Ellen White, Uriah Smith and another man went to visit Mr. Carlstedt:

“We all knelt in prayer for the sick man; and Mrs. W. praised the Lord because he was ‘**present**

with his restoring power, to raise Carlstedt, whose sickness,’ she said, was ‘not unto death, but to the glory of the Son of God.’ To me it was darkness and death; and it was an evidence to my soul that if she was right before God, then I had never known any thing about the Spirit of God. Either of us was entirely deceived.

“On our way back Mrs. W. said to me that the Lord was there with his restoring power, and she was confident that he would be restored to health again. I told her I did not realize it, and that it was darkness to me. She did not speak to me again that evening. As I parted from them, I went direct to Chicago, to continue my meetings. A few days after I came to Chicago, Mrs. W. sent me a written testimony; and in that she says she knew that I was under the influence of devils. The next day I received a dispatch that **Mr. C. was dead.** I read and re-read the testimony, and said to myself, ‘If she could see 3 years ago that Satan should take possession of my soul and body because I would not give myself entirely up to be led by her and her husband, why could she not see that Mr. C. would die a few days before he did, as her attention was called directly to his case? And if she saw my then pitiable condition so long before, why did she not warn me before Satan got me entirely under his influence?’”⁹³

Mrs. White was obviously annoyed when Charles Lee disagreed with her, and she did not speak with him the rest of the evening. It was only a matter of a few days before the inevitable letter arrived. Charles Lee was “under the influence of devils.” This pattern of character assassination was repeated over and over again.

Snook and Brinkerhoff

In 1860 M.E. Cornell raised up a Sabbath-keeping church in Marion, Iowa. The church adopted a covenant stating:

“...whose covenant obligation is briefly expressed in keeping the commandments of God and faith of Jesus, **taking the Bible, and the Bible alone**, as the rule of our faith and discipline.”⁹⁴

Unfortunately, the harmony of the Bible-based church was broken up a year and a half later when Cornell...

“...held up, publicly, some other volumes by the side of the Bible, of a recent date, and averred that these recent publications were of equal authority, and binding forever with the Bible, and urged us to adopt their teaching also, as a rule of faith and discipline.”⁹⁵

The church in Marion was split down the middle over whether to accept the writings of Ellen White on an equal basis with the Bible. News of the controversy quickly spread to the Iowa SDA Church headquarters, and the president of the Iowa conference, B.F. Snook, and the secretary, W.H. Brinkerhoff, began to openly question the divine inspiration of Ellen White. Finally, after some consideration, on November 30, 1865, the men withdrew their membership from the Seventh-day Adventist church. The reason they gave for their departure was their inability to accept the visions of Ellen G. White. Later, they published an embarrassing book that revealed many of the fallacies and errors in Mrs. White's visions.⁹⁶

Prior to their departure from the church, Mrs. White had only praise for Elder Snook and his family:

“Marion, Iowa, March 18, 1861.
My Dear Children, Henry, Edson, and Willie:

We are now at Bro. Snook's. **This is a good home.** When I see their little babe, and take it in my arms, I yearn for my own dear babe which we laid in Oak Hill Cemetery; but I will not permit one murmuring thought to arise. I enjoy the society of this family. Sister Snook is an excellent woman.”⁹⁷

After their departure, Mrs. White changed her tune. She relentlessly assassinated Snook's character:

“When B. F. Snook embraced the truth, he was very destitute. Liberal souls deprived themselves of conveniences, and even of some of the necessities of life, to help this minister, whom they believed to be a faithful servant of Christ. They did all this in good faith, helping him as they would have helped their Saviour. But it was the means of ruining the man. **His heart was not right with God; he lacked principle. He was not a truly converted man. The more he received, the greater was his desire for means. He gathered all he could from his brethren, until he had been helped, through their liberalities, to a valuable home; then he apostatized, and became the bitterest enemy of the very ones who had been most liberal to him.**”⁹⁸

E.W. Waters

E.W. Waters and his wife embraced the Advent faith in 1842 and passed through the Great Disappointment. Mr. Waters explains what happened next:

“Our next move was to believe that the door of mercy was shut against all who did not believe in

the Advent proclamation. The next step was “The Commandments of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ.” And by degrees the ‘testimony of Jesus Christ’ became the Visions of Ellen G. White, or the Visions of Ellen G. White became ‘the testimony of Jesus Christ.’ We fully endorsed the ‘Visions’ as being of God; and, apparently, all things moved on safely until I received a paper called the ‘Messenger of Truth.’ At first I felt much hurt at the thought of daring to question Ellen’s visions being of God, but thought they would shine all the brighter for scouring them with an investigation. So at it I went, comparing the ‘Visions’ with the unerring ‘word,’ and with facts. And to my great astonishment, the visions of that much loved Sister White were ‘found wanting.’”⁹⁹

Like many Adventists, the Waters were not aware of the discrepancies in Mrs. White’s writings. Many of the problems had already been covered up, and were not widely known. When the Waters were confronted with the facts, they were astonished. As a faithful Adventist, Waters brought his concerns directly to the Whites. He soon realized his mistake, however, as the Whites lambasted him:

“Bro. & Sr. White...have added error to error, and have not ceased to publish and brand me as wide as their circulation extends, as a bad and dangerous man. And yet they have not been willing to grant me a trial of any kind.”¹⁰⁰

As soon as Waters made the Whites aware of the problems he had discovered in Sister White’s writings, he was branded “a bad and dangerous man.”

H.E. Carver

In 1843, H.E. Carver heard the preaching of Millerite leader Joshua Himes and joined the 1844 Movement. After the Great Disappointment, Carver moved to Iowa and began farming. In the early 1860s Carver heard a presentation by J.H. Waggoner in Iowa City and accepted the Sabbath. For a while Carver associated with the Seventh-day Adventists, but decided to take his stand upon the Word of God alone in the spring of 1866. He founded the Christian Publishing Association, and in 1877 published a number of discomfiting revelations about Mrs. White.

Apparently an Adventist minister attempted to defend Mrs. White, and in so doing, he inadvertently gave Carver’s book more publicity than Ellen White wished. She was probably hoping the controversy would blow over without too much damage. She penned a stinging testimony criticizing the minister for attempting to reply to Carver:

“Your time can be better employed in having a more general interest and giving to the people food, meat that will feed them now. While your time is employed in following the crooks and turns of Preble you are not wise. You are bringing to their notice a work which has but limited circulation, and interesting minds in objections that they would never have been troubled with. You manufacture a train of quibbles and doubts for thousands of people and present his work to those who would never have seen it. This is just what they [our opponents] want to have done, to be brought to notice and we publish for them. This is what Carver wants. This is their main object in writing out their falsehoods and misrepresentations of the truth and the characters of those who love and advocate the truth.”¹⁰¹

The last thing Mrs. White wanted was for the evidence about her prophetic failures discussed and defended in a public forum. This would only serve to focus attention on her failures and was certain to raise doubts in the minds of her followers. When your defense is weak, it is better to avoid a direct confrontation. She advised her defenders to lay low in hopes the controversy would pass them by.

D.M. Canright

D.M. Canright was a close associate of James and Ellen White for 25 years. He ascended through the ranks of the SDA Church until he reached the highest levels, in line for a possible role as General Conference president. He was a well-known church official, an insider, whose prominent position in the church provided him access to seriously damaging information about the “prophetess” Ellen White.

Canright struggled for years with his decision to leave the church he had spent most of his adult life building up, but he finally decided he must obey his conscience and he left in the 1880s. The mere fact that such a high officer in the church would leave caused a serious blow to the SDA Church. Later, to add insult to injury, after Ellen White’s death, Canright published an incriminating book about Ellen White that was very damaging to the church.¹⁰²

As might be expected, Canright has been relentlessly attacked and villified by Seventh-day Adventists for over a century. Not even the Pope has taken as much abuse from the church as D.M. Canright. These attacks should be no surprise, however, because believers and critics alike agree that Canright’s book, with its inside account of deception and cover-up, is the most devastating book ever written about Ellen White.

In 1880, while Canright was struggling with whether to leave the SDA Church, Mrs. White wrote him a letter. She was apparently terrified about the damage Canright could

do if he were to make the truth known, so she made an urgent appeal for him to stay away from Seventh-day Adventists:

Battle Creek, Oct. 15, 1880
Elder D. M. Canright

Dear Brother:

I was made sad to hear of your decision, but I have had reason to expect it. It is a time when God is testing and proving His people. Everything that can be shaken will be shaken. Only those will stand whose souls are riveted to the eternal Rock. Those who lean to their own understanding, those who are not constantly abiding in Christ, will be subject to just such changes as this. If your faith has been grounded in man, we may then expect just such results.

But if you have decided to cut all connection with us as a people, **I have one request to make, for your own sake as well as for Christ’s sake: keep away from our people, do not visit them and talk your doubts and darkness among them.** Satan is full of exultant joy that you have stepped from beneath the banner of Jesus Christ, and stand under his banner. He sees in you one he can make a valuable agent to build up his kingdom. You are taking the very course I expected you would take if you yielded to temptation.

You have ever had a desire for power, for popularity, and this is one of the reasons for your present position. But **I beg of you to keep your doubts, your questionings, your skepticism to yourself.** The people have given you credit for more

strength of purpose and stability of character than you possessed. They thought you were a strong man; and when you breathe out your dark thoughts and feelings, Satan stands ready to make these thoughts and feelings so intensely powerful in their deceptive character, that many souls will be deceived and lost through the influence of one soul who chose darkness rather than light, and presumptuously placed himself on Satan's side in the ranks of the enemy.

The Influence of Doubt I do not ask an explanation of your course. Brother Stone wished to read your letter to me. I refused to hear it. The breath of doubt, of complaint and unbelief, is contagious; if I make my mind a channel for the filthy stream, the turbid, defiling water proceeding from Satan's fountain, some suggestion may linger in any mind, polluting it. If his suggestions have had such power on you as to lead you to sell your birthright for a mess of pottage—the friendship of the Lord's enemies—I want not to hear anything of your doubts, and **I hope you will be guarded, lest you contaminate other minds**; for the very atmosphere surrounding a man who dares to make the statements you have made is as a poisonous miasma.

I beg of you to go entirely away from those who believe the truth; for if you have chosen the world and the friends of the world, go with those of your own choice. Do not poison the minds of others and make yourself Satan's special agent to work the ruin of soul."¹⁰³

By now it has become a familiar story. If you leave the SDA church you become "Satan's special agent." If you

speak up against the falsehoods and deceptions in the church, you are speaking "poison." The only difference between Canright and other Adventists is that Mrs. White "begged" him to be quiet. Canright knew too much. To his credit, Canright obliged her, at least while she was alive, but after her death he published his book, and the church has been reeling from that blow ever since.

A.T. Jones

In 1888, elders A.T. Jones and E.J. Waggoner brought the sorely-needed message of Christ's righteousness to the SDA church. After 1888, for a period of at least eight years, Mrs. White made between 200 and 300 endorsements of Jones, frequently referring to him as one of the "Lord's messengers."¹⁰⁴ However, all that changed when Jones and others began to question her prophetic ministry. It came out in the open in 1906 when the brethren at Battle Creek had raised a number of concerns about the accuracy of Mrs. White's testimonies. That same year, Mrs. White wrote a letter to the brethren asking that their concerns be written out and sent to her. She promised to respond to their written accusations. Note carefully what she wrote:

"Recently in the visions of the night I stood in a large company of people. There were present Dr. Kellogg, Elders Jones, Tenny and Taylor, Dr. Paulson, Elder Sadler, Judge Arthur and many of their associates. I was directed by the Lord to request them and any others who have perplexities and grievous things in their minds regarding the testimonies that I have borne, to specify what their objections and criticisms are. **The Lord will help me to answer these objections, and to make plain that which seems to be intricate.**"¹⁰⁵

The brethren obeyed Mrs. White's request, and sent a letter detailing their concerns. Then, instead of answering

them, as she had promised, Mrs. White turned around and pronounced it was not the Lord's will for her to answer these questions. A.T. Jones was disturbed by Mrs. White's inexplicable change of heart. It was all too obvious that the reason she did not answer the objections was because they could not be answered. The evidence was irrefutable. To Jones, this must have seemed an implicit acknowledgement that she was not everything she claimed to be. As might be expected, he soon began to question her prophetic ministry. Mrs. White responded by attacking him with a vengeance:

“Dear Brother, Again and again your case has been presented before me. I am now instructed to say to you, You have had a large knowledge of truth, and less, far less, spiritual understanding. When you were called to the important work at Washington, you had need of far more of the humble grace that becometh a Christian. Since the Berrien Springs meeting, your attitude and the attitude of several others has grieved the Spirit of God. **You have been weighed in the balance and found wanting.**”¹⁰⁶

Apparently, anyone who dared to question her role as a prophet was “weighed in the balance and found wanting.” Even though the prophetess was elderly and had, to some degree, lost part of her earlier influence, she did what she could to destroy the character of Jones. In the following letter she urged church members to avoid Jones, Kellogg, and others who questioned her authority. As with Canright, she was apparently fearful of the influence of these church leaders:

“A. T. Jones, Dr. Kellogg, and Elder Tenney are all working under the same leadership. They are classing themselves with those of whom the apostle writes, ‘Some shall depart from the faith, giving

heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.’ In the case of A. T. Jones, I can see the fulfillment of the warnings that were given me regarding him.

“I want this message to come to you before you shall make a wrong move. I do not want you to imperil your souls. Heed the message that the Lord sends, and **have nothing to do with those at Battle Creek who are opposing the messages of the Spirit of God.** Clear light has been given me regarding those who are thus departing from the faith.”¹⁰⁷

The case of A.T. Jones is a sad story. He was a talented and influential leader in the SDA Church. He had stood before the United States Congress and argued against a national Sunday law. He had courageously preached the message of righteousness by faith to a church steeped in legalism. But when confronted with undeniable evidence that Mrs. White was not a prophet, he did what any good believer would do. He wanted to listen to both sides of the story before making a decision. So he wrote the prophetess asking for an explanation. But he was met with stony silence. There would be no explanation. Jones must accept Mrs. White's ministry on faith, regardless of the evidence. This he could not do. His whole life and ministry had been established upon a faith that is based upon evidence—Biblical evidence. To believe in someone's prophetic gift when all the evidence indicated otherwise was too much to ask. The time had come to leave the SDA church, to be forever remembered by the church he spent his entire life building up as one who gave “heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.”

A.F. Ballenger

Albion F. Ballenger was a Seventh-day Adventist minister in England. While undertaking a serious study of the book of Hebrews, he discovered that he could not establish the SDA doctrine of the Sanctuary from the Scriptures. His conscience bothered him so much that he decided not to preach on the subject again until he could explain it from the Bible. He wrote a lengthy letter to Sister White, laying out all the difficulties with the SDA Sanctuary teaching. He closed the letter by humbly explaining the dilemma he now found himself in:

“And now Sister White, what can I do? **If I accept the testimony of the Scriptures, if I follow my conscientious convictions, I find myself under your condemnation; and you call me a wolf in sheep’s clothing, and warn my brethren and the members of my family against me.** But when I turn in my sorrow to the Word of the Lord, that Word reads the same, and I fear to reject God’s interpretation and accept yours. Oh that I might accept both. But if I must accept but one, hadn’t I better accept the Lord’s? If I reject his word and accept yours, can you save me in the judgment? When side by side we stand before the great white throne; if the Master should ask me why I taught that ‘within the veil’ was in the first apartment of the sanctuary, what shall I answer? Shall I say, ‘Because Sister White, who claimed to be commissioned to interpret the Scriptures for me, told me that this was the true interpretation, and that if I did not accept it and teach it I would rest under your condemnation?’”¹⁰⁸

When Mrs. White learned of Ballenger’s concerns, she did not provide any answer to the Biblical evidence he presented in his letter. Rather, she wrote a heated testimony that told him, in no uncertain terms, that the events of the past *proved* her interpretation of the Sanctuary to be correct, regardless of any Scripture he might find to the contrary:

“We are not to receive the words of those who come with a message that contradicts the special points of our faith. **They gather together a mass of Scripture, and pile it as proof around their asserted theories.** This has been done over and over again during the past fifty years. And while the Scriptures are God’s word, and are to be respected, the application of them, if such application moves one pillar from the foundation that God has sustained these fifty years, is a great mistake. He who makes such an application knows not the wonderful demonstration of the Holy Spirit that gave power and force to the past messages that have come to the people of God.

“We must be decided on this subject; for the points that he is trying to prove by Scripture, are not sound. They do not prove that the past experience of God’s people was a fallacy. We had the truth; we were directed by the angels of God. It was under the guidance of the Holy Spirit that the presentation of the sanctuary question was given. **It is eloquence for every one to keep silent in regard to the features of our faith in which they acted no part.** God never contradicts Himself. Scripture proofs are misapplied if forced to testify to that which is not true. Another and still another will arise and bring

in supposedly great light, and make their assertions. But we stand by the old landmarks.

“...We are hindered in our work by men who are not converted, who seek their own glory. They wish to be thought originators of new theories, which they present claiming that they are truth. But if these theories are received, they will lead to a denial of the truth that for the past fifty years God has been giving to His people, substantiating it by the **demonstration of the Holy Spirit.**”¹⁰⁹

Instead of explaining why there was no Biblical support for the Sanctuary doctrine, or instead of offering to provide Biblical support, Mrs. White insinuated Ballenger was unconverted, seeking his “own glory.” She told Ballenger to “keep silent.” Shut up! In effect, you were not around here when we concocted these teachings, so just be quiet!

In a later testimony, she warned people away from listening to Ballenger by claiming he was under the control of evil spirits:

“I testify in the name of the Lord that Elder Ballenger is led by satanic agencies and spiritualistic, invisible leaders. Those who have the guidance of the Holy Spirit will turn away from these seducing spirits.”¹¹⁰

In the end, Ballenger needed more than a purported “demonstration of the Holy Spirit” to believe a doctrine. He needed Biblical proof! And when he could not find it, and when Ellen White could not answer him, he did what any honest Bible-believer would do. He refused to preach the Sanctuary doctrine. He was rewarded by being cast out of the church. In 1984, pastor Henry F. Brown, who had been a minister in the SDA church for 60 years, visited Ballenger’s daughter. He reports:

“In later years, being down in Riverside, California we learned that his daughter was still alive, a lady in her 80’s. We went to visit her, a very pleasant lady, and she told us how, when they dropped him from the work, there wasn’t a cent of remuneration, just left to themselves and how they wept and wondered how they would get along. He was a godly Christian until his death.”¹¹¹

What a tragic way to treat a man who had dedicated his whole life to the SDA church, whose only mistake was to ask the church’s prophetess for Biblical evidence for their teachings.

Ellen White believed herself to be the Spirit of Prophecy. Therefore, anyone who questioned her visions, her teachings or her authority *must* be under the influence of the devil. Anyone who studied the Bible and arrived at a conclusion different from hers *must* be misapplying Scriptures. Anyone who rejected her authority *must* be lost, because they no longer accepted the “Spirit of Prophecy” (Ellen White), and were thus no longer a part of God’s remnant church which had the Commandments of God and the Testimony of Jesus.

Many more examples could be given. These are sufficient to show that belief in Ellen White as a prophet was considered essential for being a member of God’s remnant church, and those who rejected her as a prophet were “doomed,” “damned,” and “lost.”

7

Civil War Prophetess

In the early 1860s the United States was embroiled in a bitter Civil War. Many Adventists, uncertain of the future, turned to their prophetess for guidance and comfort. H.E. Carver was a Seventh-day Adventist minister in Iowa during this traumatic period of history, labored closely with the Whites. When the Civil War broke out he, like many other Adventists, looked to Ellen White for counsel and guidance. Here is his testimony about Sister White and the Civil War:

“The whole church was anxiously and prayerfully desirous to know what was duty at that crisis, and it did seem that the time had come if it ever was to come for the divine inspiration of Mrs. White to be demonstrated. True, an attempt was made to gain some credit for her by publishing a vision of the battle of Bull Run **after it was fought and the result known**, but the attempt was so ludicrously absurd that it was, I believe, never repeated. She could describe the battle of Bull Run **after it occurred**, but she could not tell us beforehand of Sherman’s triumphant march through rebeldom, of Lee’s surrender to Grant at Appomattox, or of our much beloved and lamented President’s assassination. She could not even give us any instructions how to act in case of being drafted until it was too late to be of service.

“She did, however, claim to have visions during the war, one of the principal items of which related to the proper length of the sisters’ dresses; and upon this subject, plain and simple as it may seem, her instructions to the sister have been contradictory; at one time directing them to wear dresses that would clear the filth of the streets an inch or two and another directing that they do not reach the ground by 8 or 9 inches.”¹¹²

While the minds of Adventists were occupied with the horrible war gripping the nation, Mrs. White was industriously writing testimonies about the length of women’s dresses! Another SDA minister, D.M. Canright, was a young man during the Civil War. He was a close associate of the Whites and wrote about his wartime experience with this couple:

“We hoped Mrs. White would have a revelation. And she did have several of them, covering thirty pages of printed matter in Volume 1 of *Testimonies for the Church*. At the time, we read these revelations with great anxiety, hoping for light ahead. We were disappointed. They simply told just what everybody already knew, reflecting the sentiments of those opposed to the Government and the war. It was a forced attempt to say something when she had nothing to tell. Read in the light of today, it is seen to be mere guess work, mostly wrong.”¹¹³

It was nearly two years into the war before Mrs. White finally made an attempt at a prophecy. She says: “Jan. 4, 1862, I was shown some things in regard to our nation.”¹¹⁴ So what gems of prophetic knowledge did she have for the Adventists? Astonishingly, she informs her followers that

the purpose of the war is to preserve the institution of slavery! Listen to her words of insight:

“Thousands have been induced to enlist with the understanding that this war was to exterminate slavery; but now that they are fixed, they find that they have been deceived; that **the object of this war is not to abolish slavery, but to preserve it as it is.**

“The war is not to do away with slavery, but merely to preserve the Union.”¹¹⁵

Mrs. White continues:

“They [the soldiers] inquire, ‘If we succeed in quelling the rebellion, what has been gained?’ They can only answer discouragingly, ‘Nothing’. ... The system of slavery, which has ruined our nation, is left to live and stir up another rebellion.”¹¹⁶

Looking back in history, it becomes apparent Mrs. White did not have a clue as to what was happening. According to historical records, the issue of slavery was indeed a focal point in the war:

“One issue, however, overshadowed all others—the right of the federal government to prohibit slavery in the Western territories. Such legislation would severely limit the number of slave states in the Union. At the same time the number of free states would keep multiplying. Many Southerners feared that a government increasingly dominated by free states might eventually endanger existing slaveholdings. Thus the South strongly opposed all efforts to block the expansion of slavery.”¹¹⁷

Not long after Mrs. White’s proclamation that the war was not about ending slavery, President Lincoln issued the

Emancipation Proclamation. This proclamation, issued on Sep. 22, 1862, promised freedom for all slaves in the southern states. Several years later, all slaves were freed by the 13th Amendment to the Constitution, ratified on Dec. 18, 1865.

It must have been disappointing for the Adventists to read Mrs. White’s testimonies about the war. It became painfully obvious that she did not know what was going to happen. Realizing this, perhaps she decided she should stick to a subject where she was more knowledgeable: The length of women’s dresses! Wasn’t dress length of more importance than a war that was to shape the future course of the United States, and perhaps the world? She had much to say on the subject of proper dress during the Civil War era.

Even after the war, she was apparently still in doubt about the future of slavery. She even prophesied that slavery would be revived again in the South:

“Slavery will again be revived in the Southern States; for the spirit of slavery still lives. Therefore it will not do for those who labor among the colored people to preach the truth as boldly and openly as they would be free to do in other places.”¹¹⁸

Needless to say, this prophecy failed, and like so many of her botched prophecies, it slipped silently away, rarely to be mentioned among Adventists again. In the 1860s Mrs. White not only threw her fruitless prophetic energies into dress reform, but also made herself into a prophetess of health...

8

Health Reform or Health Myth?

In the 1860s Mrs. White became deeply interested in health reform. Prior to this she had manifested little interest in the subject. Other Adventists had shown interest in proper diet, but the prophetess of God did not yet see its importance. In the 1850s an Adventist couple, Mr. and Mrs. Curtis, began studying the issue of unclean meats and came to the conclusion that eating unclean meats was wrong. Mrs. Curtis wanted to stop eating pork, but apparently felt it would be wise to check with God's prophetess first. Mrs. White replied to the couple with a scathing 6-page testimony. Here is part of what she wrote:

"If God requires His people to abstain from swine's flesh, He will convict them on the matter. He is just as willing to show His honest children their duty, as to show their duty to individuals upon whom He has not laid the burden of His work. If it is the duty of the church to abstain from swine's flesh, God will discover it to more than two or three. He will teach His church their duty."¹⁹

Mrs. White's thrashing of the Curtis family leads one to speculate that she was not very amenable to church members arriving at their own theological conclusions without the approval of James and herself. This was a matter of insubordination and it must be dealt with. After all, Mrs. White thought that her husband had settled the

matter forever a few years earlier when he published an article on the subject in the now-defunct *Present Truth*:

"Some of our good brethren have added 'swine's flesh' to the catalogue of things forbidden by the Holy Ghost, and the apostles and elders assembled at Jerusalem. But we feel called upon to protest against such a course, as being contrary to the plain teaching of the holy scriptures. Shall we lay a greater 'burden' on the disciples than seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and the holy apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ? God forbid. Their decision, being right, settled the question with them, and was a cause of rejoicing among the churches, and it should forever settle the question with us."²⁰

When James said "we feel called upon to protest against such a course," the "we" he was referring to must have included his wife, the prophetess of God. Thus the Whites must have been grieved that some of their followers were bringing up the subject again after James had settled the question "forever."

A friend of the Curtis family, H.E. Carver, takes us behind the scenes and explains what happened:

Brother and Sister Curtis were among my most intimate friends for many years, and as we lived side by side a portion of the time, I knew some of the circumstances connected with the vision instruction given above. Sister Curtis was a very conscientious woman, and becoming satisfied (long before any movement was made in that direction by Eld. and Mrs. White) that pork-eating was injurious, she tried to banish it from the table. This produced trouble. Sister C. was a sincere believer in Mrs. White's divine inspiration, and from the extract [testimony] given above, it appears that she must

have written to her for instructions, which she received as above; and that professedly through vision. ... Bro. Curtis also stated that Eld. White had endorsed on the back of the letter the following in substance: 'That you may know how we stand on this question, I would say that we have just put down a two hundred pound porker.'"¹²¹

It certainly would have been difficult for the Whites to agree with the Curtis family inasmuch as the Whites had just "put down" a 200-pound pig! Whether or not the Curtis family ever accepted this testimony we may never know. We do know, however, that Mrs. White believed that when she wrote out a testimony, God was speaking through her: "In ancient times God spoke through the mouths of prophets and apostles. In these days he speaks to them by the Testimonies of his Spirit."¹²² In a matter of a few years, Mrs. White was seeing the subject in a new light. The next time she gave voice to God on the subject she wrote: "Never should one morsel of swine's flesh be placed upon your table."¹²³

What brought about Ellen White's dramatic shift on health reform? Was it learned by studying the Bible? Was it a vision from God? Not exactly. The White boys had become ill with Diphtheria in January of 1863, and at that time, the Whites had the good fortune to find the writings of a prominent American health reformer named Dr. James Jackson. In the mid-1800s the most prominent medical institution in the United States, featuring reforms in diet and in the treatment of the sick, was operated by Dr. Jackson at Dansville, New York. Dr. Jackson was foremost in promoting a vegetarian two-meal-a-day diet, "water cures" (hydrotherapy), and a reformed style of dress for women. Grandson Arthur White explains the good fortune of the Whites finding Dr. Jackson's article:

"Fortunately—in the providence of God, no doubt—there had come into their hands, probably through an 'exchange' of papers at the Review office, either the *Yates County Chronicle*, of Penn Yan, New York, or some journal quoting from it, an extended article entitled 'Diphtheria, Its Causes, Treatment and Cure.' It was written by Dr. James C. Jackson, of Dansville, New York."¹²⁴

James was so impressed that he reprinted Jackson's article on Diphtheria in the February 17, 1863, edition of the *Review and Herald*. In June of 1863 James wrote to Dr. Jackson requesting some of his books. James apparently received the books sometime in the late summer or early fall because he printed an article out of Jackson's book *Laws of Life* in the October 27 issue of the *Review and Herald*.

In August of 1864 the Whites decided to travel to Dansville, New York, to meet Dr. Jackson. This was quite a step forward for the Whites. Fifteen years earlier, in 1849, Mrs. White had taken a strong stand against the remnant using physicians for their health problems: "If any among us are sick, let us not dishonor God by applying to earthly physicians, but apply to the God of Israel."¹²⁵ But times had changed, and perhaps the 1849 statement no longer applied to modern physicians. Besides, this was one of those controversial statements that James had "whited out" when he reprinted Mrs. White's earliest writings in 1851, under the title *A Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White*. Since few were aware of the original statement, it was probably safe to visit a physician.

Mrs. White was apparently impressed with the reforms she witnessed at the Dansville institution, and she and Dr. Jackson became cordial friends. Later, such a close relationship developed that Mrs. White could write that she

was warmly received as a guest when she visited Dr. Jackson's home: "The same day I saw Dr. Jackson at his home and he kindly granted me an interview."¹²⁶

Dr. Jackson gave Mrs. White a physical examination. His diagnosis matched that of her Adventist physician. They both diagnosed her unusual medical problems as hysteria. (Hysteria is a medical condition typically beginning during adolescence or early adulthood and occurring more commonly in women. Symptoms of hysterical attacks include visual and auditory hallucinations, paralysis of muscular groups, and unresponsiveness to external stimuli. Hysterical attacks usually diminish as the patient ages and often cease by mid-life.)

While Dr. Jackson may have attributed her visions to hallucinations, most Adventists believed the visions came directly from God. Interestingly enough, Mrs. White began to have visions on the subject of health during this time period. When she published the health visions, church members who were familiar with Dr. Jackson's writings were incredulous to find that her health reforms so closely resembled his writings. So many questions were raised about their authenticity, Mrs. White was forced to defend her visions in the church's paper:

"As I introduced the subject of health to friends where I labored in Michigan, New England, and in the State of New York, and spoke against drugs and flesh meats, and in favor of water, pure air, and a proper diet, the reply was often made, 'You speak very nearly the opinions taught in the *Laws of Life*, and other publications, by Drs. Trall, Jackson, and others. Have you read that paper and those works?'

"My reply was that I had not, neither should I read them till I had fully written out my views, lest

it should be said that I have received my light upon the subject of health from physicians, and not from the Lord.

"And after I had written my six articles for *How to Live*, I then searched the various works on hygiene and was surprised to find them so nearly in harmony with what the Lord had revealed to me."¹²⁷

While Mrs. White was "surprised" by the harmony between her writings and Dr. Jackson's books, some were not surprised at all. For them, here was yet another incident where the writings of others became the visions of Ellen White. While church members were still debating whether Mrs. White read *How to Live* before or after she published her health articles, Mrs. White decided to publish her first book on health reform. This book would later raise even more difficult questions for the young prophetess. The book, published in 1864, was entitled *An Appeal to Mothers: The Great Cause of the Physical, Mental, and Moral Ruin of Children of Our Time*. What precious light on health reform had Mrs. White received from God for His remnant people? The whole intent of the book was to warn parents of the dire consequences of masturbation!

Following in the footsteps of health reformer Sylvester Graham, who two decades earlier had written a book on the subject, Mrs. White decided her church members needed to be warned about the health dangers of masturbation. On the first page of her book she warns of the astonishing numbers of deaths caused by masturbation: "Have you observed the astonishing mortality among the youth?" She then goes on to explain how masturbation is causing the deaths of young people.

Mrs. White developed a long list of ailments supposedly caused by masturbation. In addition to causing death,

masturbation also supposedly causes the following ailments:

- Insanity
- Epilepsy
- Impaired eyesight
- Bleeding at the lungs
- Spasms of the heart and lungs
- Diabetes
- Rheumatism
- Affected perspiration
- Consumption [tuberculosis]
- Asthma

Besides these, she lists more than a dozen other ailments caused by masturbation. She warns “self-abuse opens the door for...almost every disease from which humanity suffers” and “self-abuse is a sure road to the grave.”¹²⁸

Let us examine a few excerpts from her book:

“I feel alarmed for those children and you who by solitary vice are ruining themselves...you listen to numerous complaints of headache, catarrh, dizziness, nervousness, pain in the shoulders and side, loss of appetite, pain in the back and limbs...and have you not noticed that there was a deficiency in the mental health of your children?”

“Secret indulgence [masturbation] is, in many cases, the only real cause of the numerous complaints of the young.”¹²⁹

“The state of the world is alarming. Everywhere we look we see imbecility, dwarfed forms, crippled limbs, misshapen heads and deformity of every description... Corrupt habits are wasting their energy, and bringing upon them loathsome and complicated diseases... Children who practice self-

indulgence [masturbation] ...must pay the penalty.”¹³⁰

“If the practice is continued from the ages of 15 and upward, nature will protest...and will make them pay the penalty...by numerous pains in the system, and various diseases, such as affection of the liver and lungs, neuralgia, rheumatism, affection of the spine, diseased kidneys and cancerous humours... There is often a sudden breaking down of the constitution, and death is the result.”¹³¹

“The result of self abuse in them is seen in various diseases, such as catarrh, dropsy, headache, loss of memory and sight, great weakness in the back and loins, affections of the spine, and frequently, inward decay of the head... The mind is often utterly ruined, and insanity supervenes... Such are just as much self-murderers as though they pointed a pistol to their own breast... Among the young the vital capital, and the brain are so severely taxed at an early age, that there is deficiency and great exhaustion, which leave the system exposed to diseases of various kinds. But the most common of these is consumption [tuberculosis]... They must die.”¹³²

Mrs. White goes on to describe the case of a two-year-old child suffering from epilepsy and paralysis whose problems were supposedly brought on by masturbation. She writes, “By the most vigilant use of mechanical means for confining the hands, covering the genitals, etc. the child was at length cured; he now enjoys good health.” If such measures were performed by health-care providers today, they would most likely lose their license to practice, and may even be jailed for child abuse.

According to Mrs. White, not only does masturbation cause death and a wide range of physical ailments, it also causes mental health problems: “The mind is often utterly ruined, and insanity takes place.”¹³³ Mrs. White continues:

“I saw a young woman in a town of Massachusetts who made herself an idiot by masturbation.”¹³⁴

“In the fall of 1844, the writer visited the Massachusetts State Lunatic Hospital.... Our attention was suddenly arrested by a peculiarly haggard, frantic, wild, fiendish appearance of a young man, with his eye turned back over his shoulder. Struck with his shocking aspect, we inquired...what was the cause of his insanity. ‘Solitary vice,’ was the ready reply.”¹³⁵

From a modern medical perspective Mrs. White’s statements certainly seem outlandish. Medical research during the 20th century completely disproved the old myths that masturbation leads to insanity, stunts growth, causes blindness, etc. Research has shown no adverse short-term or long-term effects from masturbation. Researchers found that on average, those who masturbated had no higher incidence of disease, eyesight problems, or insanity than the general population. There was also no difference in life expectancy. Even among Seventh-day Adventist physicians, there is now a near-universal belief that masturbation does not cause the illnesses mentioned by Mrs. White. In 1981 physician Dr. Gregory Hunt evaluated Mrs. White’s statements on masturbation:

“Anyone can see that these diseases are not caused by masturbation. Tuberculosis is caused by a germ, a specific bacterium. In fact the germ that causes

tuberculosis was discovered shortly after these writings of Ellen White. ... After reading these wise counsels and realizing Ellen White claimed divine inspiration for them, I would say there is only one class of person that could continue to believe that Ellen White is a true prophet. This type of person can only be classed as an idiot.”¹³⁶

Mrs. White’s statements may appear idiotic to us today, but in the mid-1800s myths about the perils of masturbation abounded. Health reformer Sylvester Graham helped to popularize the dangers of masturbation. In his *Lectures to Young Men on Chastity* published in 1834 he lectured on the dangers of “self abuse” or “self pollution.” Graham believed the symptoms were easy to recognize—victims were usually shy, suspicious, languid, unconcerned with hygiene, jaundiced. According to Graham, a masturbator grows up “with a body full of disease, and with a mind in ruins, the loathsome habit still tyrannizing over him, with the inexorable imperiousness of a fiend of darkness.”¹³⁷

Graham warned that masturbation could lead to death:

“...ulcerous sores, in some cases, break out upon the head, breast, back and thighs; and these sometimes enlarge into permanent fistulas, of a cancerous character, and continue, perhaps for years, to discharge great quantities of foetid, loathsome pus; and not unfrequently terminate in death.”¹³⁸

It is very likely that Mrs. White was familiar with Graham’s teachings. In fact, some of Mrs. White’s health reforms appear to closely resemble those of Mr. Graham. In 1849, some 14 years before Mrs. White’s first vision on this subject, Sylvester Graham expounded upon health reform in his book *Lectures on the Science of Human Life*. Here are the reforms he proposed:

- Avoid all simulating and unnatural foods, living “entirely on the products of the vegetable kingdom and pure water.”
- Butter should be used “very sparingly.”
- Fresh milk and eggs were frowned upon but not proscribed.
- Cheese was permitted only if mild and unaged.
- Condiments and spices, such as pepper, mustard, and cinnamon, were banned as being “all highly exciting and exhausting.”
- Tea and coffee, like alcohol and tobacco, poisoned the system.
- Pastries, with the exception of fruit pies, were “among the most pernicious articles of human ailment.”
- Sleep was preferable before midnight.
- Sleep should be taken in a well-ventilated room.
- A sponge bath every morning was desirable.
- Clothing should not be restrictive.
- “All medicine, as such, is itself an evil.”¹³⁹

To avid readers of Ellen White the above reforms sound all too familiar. As the years advanced and medical science advanced, people undoubtedly began to question whether Mrs. White’s counsel on “self-abuse” had originated with God or Sylvester Graham. Even Ellen White seems to have backed away from the subject in later life. Despite writing prolifically on the topic during her early career, she does not write a single word about masturbation during the last 40 years of her life.

Today, most Adventists are completely unaware that the book *Appeal to Mothers* ever existed. One would expect that a prophet’s first book on health reform would contain

valuable insight from heaven for her followers. Not so in this case! The book was removed from publication many years ago. Like so many of her other writings and visions that were proven incorrect, this book simply disappeared from the public sight. Unlike fellow prophet Mary Baker Eddy—whose first book *Science and Health*, published in 1875, sold over 10 million copies—Mrs. White’s first health reform book was a dismal failure. Later efforts would prove more successful. With the assistance of her staff of professional writers and editors, she was able to produce a much better health reform book that is still available today, entitled *Ministry of Healing*. Not surprisingly, the subject of “self abuse” is never mentioned. *Appeal to Mothers* may have been the first book to disappear from publication, but it was not to be the last...

9

More Disappearing Books

1864 was not a good year for Mrs. White's books. That year she published another book, which also proved to be short lived. The book was entitled *An Appeal to Youth*. It contained letters that Mrs. White wrote to her children over a period of several years. Although less controversial than *Appeal to Mothers*, it raised some eyebrows with controversial statements such as:

"The Lord loves those little children who try to do right, and he has promised that they shall be in his kingdom. But wicked children God does not love. ... God loves honest-hearted, truthful children, but cannot love those who are dishonest."¹⁴⁰

Needless to say, *An Appeal to Youth* vanished from the bookshelves many decades ago.

As early as the 1860s some people had begun questioning whether Mrs. White was receiving her book material from God or from human sources. Perhaps one of the first books from which she drew material from was the Apocrypha. In the early days, the Whites (and Joseph Bates) held the Apocrypha in high regard. In 1850 Mrs. White spoke while in vision that her followers needed to understand the Apocrypha: "I saw that the Apocrypha was the hidden book, and that the wise of these last days should understand it."¹⁴¹ The Whites quoted from the Apocrypha several times in their 1847 publication "A Word to the Little Flock." Some of Mrs. White's descriptions in *Early*

Writings sound strikingly similar to those found in the apocryphal book of Esdras:

<i>Early Writings</i>	<i>2nd Esdras</i>
Before entering the city, the saints were arranged in a perfect square, with Jesus in the midst. He stood head and shoulders above the saints and above the angels. ... As Jesus called for the crowns, angels presented them to Him, and with His own right hand, the lovely Jesus placed the crowns on the heads of the saints. (p. 287-288)	I, Ezra, saw on Mount Zion a great multitude, which I could not number, and they all were praising the Lord with songs. In their midst was a young man of great stature, taller than any of the others, and on the head of each of them he placed a crown, but he was more exalted than they. And I was held spellbound. 2:42,43 (RAPC)
Mount Zion was just before us, and on the mount was a glorious temple, and about it were seven other mountains, on which grew roses and lilies. And I saw the little ones climb, or, if they chose, use their little wings and fly, to the top of the mountains and pluck the never-fading flowers. (p. 18)	I will send you help, my servants Isaiah and Jeremiah. According to their counsel I have consecrated and prepared for you twelve trees loaded with various fruits, and the same number of springs flowing with milk and honey, and seven mighty mountains on which roses and lilies grow; by these I will fill your children with joy. 2:18,19

In addition to the Apocrypha, Mrs. White was familiar with some of the other classic writings of her day. Her description of the dazzling gold serpent in the Garden of Eden appears amazingly similar to John Milton's description of a serpent "with burnisht neck of verdant gold" found in his book *Paradise Lost*. Her descriptions of the "holy light" upon Enoch's countenance, as found in *Patriarchs and Prophets*, are similar to the *Book of Jasher* where Enoch is seen with a "Godlike awe" upon his

countenance. Her descriptions of Noah's flood seem to also parallel the *Book of Jasher*:

<i>Patriarchs and Prophets</i>	<i>Book of Jasher</i>
Amid the prevailing corruption, Methuselah, Noah, and many others labored to keep alive the knowledge of the true God and to stay the tide of moral evil. (p. 94)	5:9. And Noah and Methuselah spoke all the words of the Lord to the sons of men, day after day, constantly speaking to them.
They were unwilling to renounce their sins. (p. 95)	5:10. But the sons of men would not hearken to them, nor incline their ears to their words, and they were stiffnecked.
Had the antediluvians believed the warning, and repented of their evil deeds, the Lord would have turned aside His wrath, as He afterward did from Nineveh. (p. 97)	5:11. And the Lord granted them a period of one hundred and twenty years, saying, If they will return, then will God repent of the evil, so as not to destroy the earth.
But upon the eighth day dark clouds overspread the heavens. There followed the muttering of thunder and the flash of lightning. Soon large drops of rain began to fall. The world had never witnessed anything like this, and the hearts of men were struck with fear. (p. 99)	6:11. And on that day...the sun darkened...and the lightning flashed, and the thunder roared, and all the fountains in the earth were broken up, such as was not known to the inhabitants before; and God did this mighty act, in order to terrify the sons of men...
Others were frantic with fear, stretching their hands toward the ark and pleading for admittance. But their entreaties were in vain. Conscience was at last aroused to know that there is a God who ruleth in the heavens. They called upon Him earnestly, but His ear was not open to their cry. (p. 100)	6:18. And they called to Noah saying open for us that we may come to thee in the ark-and wherefore shall we die? 6:23. [Noah replied:] "But now you come and tell me this on account of the troubles of your souls, now also the Lord will not listen to you, neither will he give ear to you..."

The massive ark trembled in every fiber as it was beaten by the merciless winds and flung from billow to billow. The cries of the beasts within expressed their fear and pain. But amid the warring elements it continued to ride safely. (p. 100)	6:28. And the ark floated upon the face of the waters, and it was tossed upon the waters... 6:30. And the living creatures that were in the ark were terrified, and the lions roared, and the oxen lowed, and the wolves howled, and every living creature in the ark spoke and lamented in its own language, so that their voices reached to a great distance...
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Perhaps the most blatant example of plagiarism occurred in a book that was to eventually disappear from publication entitled *Sketches from the Life of Paul*. It was a 334-page book published in 1883. In the preface the publishers declared it to be written by "special help from the Spirit of God."¹⁴² However, an avid reader of Christian books later noticed that Mrs. White had received "special help" from Conybeare and Howson's book published in 1855, entitled *Life and Epistles of the Apostle Paul*. Comparisons reveal that Mrs. White copied a large part of her book directly from Conybeare's book. However, she never made any reference to the other book, nor did she give any credit to the other authors.

In 1907, an Adventist named Dr. Stewart published an 89-page pamphlet, in which he arranged in parallel columns the quotations from Mrs. White's book and Conybeare's book. The pamphlet showed beyond dispute that she copied her matter directly from the older book. After this controversy erupted, her book was withdrawn from publication and is no longer even listed among the books penned by Mrs. White. Charges of plagiarism had been floating around for years, but this book was perhaps the most blatant example. The fact that Mrs. White plagiarized this book would most certainly raise questions about her

other books. Already charges of plagiarism were surfacing regarding her other books, such as the *Great Controversy*. Therefore, in order to quiet further controversy and debate over the inspiration and ethics of Mrs. White, *Sketches from the Life of Paul* was withdrawn from publication. General conference president A.G. Daniels discusses the incident at the 1919 conference on the Spirit of Prophecy:

“Now you know something about that little book, *The Life of Paul*. You know the difficulty we got into about that. We could never claim inspiration in the whole thought and make up of the book, because it has been thrown aside because it was badly put together. Credits were not given to the proper authorities, and **some of that crept into *The Great Controversy***. . . . I suppose you all know about it and knew what claims were put up against her, charges made of plagiarism, even by the authors of the book, Conybeare and Howson, and were liable to make the denomination trouble because there was so much of their book put into *Life of Paul* without any credit or quotation marks. . . . I found it out, and I read it with Brother Palmer when he found it, and we got Conybeare and Howson, and we got Wylie’s *History of the Reformation*, and we read word for word, page after page, and no quotations, no credit, and really I did not know the difference until I began to compare them. **I supposed it was Sister White’s own work!** . . . There I saw the manifestation of the human in these writings. Of course I could have said this, and I did say it, that I wished a different course had been taken in the compilation of the books. If proper care had been exercised, it would have saved a lot of people from being thrown off track...”¹⁴³

The revelations about the plagiarism in the *Life of Paul* apparently threw a number of people “off track.” Imagine the shock Mrs. White’s loyal followers must have felt when they realized the book they were reading was not the product of inspired visions received by the prophet of God, but merely the product of the imagination of non-Adventist authors. It immediately called into question all of her other writings. This incident opened A.G. Daniells’ eyes to Sister White and her plagiarism, and he “saw the manifestation of the human.” Unfortunately for Mrs. White, so did many others.

Approximately 100 years after the publication of *Life of Paul*, Seventh-day Adventist pastor Walter Rea published the results of his research through which he found that a significant amount of Ellen White’s writings were plagiarized from other authors. He explains how, as new evidence kept unfolding, the church was forced to admit that larger and still larger amounts of Mrs. White’s writings were plagiarized:

The defense for her [Ellen White’s] actions that was used up until our time [the 1980’s] was that the amount was the important issue and that that amount varied from 8% to 10%, depending upon which apologist one read or wanted to believe. It was not until the church hired Dr. Fred Veltmen [SDA theologian from Pacific Union College] to study the book *Desire of Ages* that the figure was raised to 30% or more depending upon the chapters chosen in the book one was using. After great expense and almost eight years, Veltman confirmed what other studies had showed, that depending upon the material used from Ellen White’s writing, the copy work could be as much as 90%. In fact, Dr. Don McAdams, an Adventist Scholar [who wrote his doctoral thesis on the *Great Controversy*] had

stated in the 1980 Glendale meeting that ‘if every paragraph in the book *Great Controversy*, written by Ellen White, was properly footnoted, then every paragraph would have to be footnoted.’ That statement has never been seriously challenged by any member of the church.”¹⁴⁴

After eight years of study at church expense, Dr. Fred Veltman published his finding on the *Desire of Ages*, and he noted:

“Implicitly or explicitly, Ellen White and others speaking on her behalf did not admit to and even denied literary dependency [copying] on her part.”
 “I must admit at the start that in my judgment this is the most serious problem to be faced in connection with Ellen White’s literary dependence [copying]. It strikes at the heart of her honesty, her integrity, and therefore her trustworthiness.”¹⁴⁵

Not only was Mrs. White’s trustworthiness shaken by the various plagiarism scandals, so was the credibility of the Seventh-day Adventist church. It appears as if the church stridently defended Ellen White against charges of plagiarism, while at the same time church leaders were apparently aware, or at least suspicious that she had indeed engaged in plagiarism. Officials discussed the problems behind closed doors in 1919 but the transcript of that meeting was not released until 1974. So for 55 years—until the transcript was “discovered” in a vault at General Conference headquarters—the church membership was left in ignorance regarding Mrs. White’s plagiarism. Even today, most church members have little idea as to the extent of Mrs. White’s literary “borrowing.” So successful was the cover-up of the withdrawal of the *Life of Paul*, that few Adventists today have any idea that their prophetess stole the words directly from another book and published them

under her name. Even fewer Adventists realize that Ellen White’s landmark book, *The Great Controversy*, was actually written by another man...

10

The Great Controversy Myth

Among Adventists, few books are held in higher regard than the *Great Controversy*. This book unravels the mysteries of the future, presenting scenes that supposedly will take place at the end of earth's history. Millions of copies of the book have been printed and distributed throughout the world.

The origin of this profound book is shrouded in mystery. It all began in 1858, at Lovett's Grove, where Mrs. White supposedly received a panoramic vision of the future. As the story goes, over a period of years Mrs. White wrote out portions of this great vision, which is now known as the "great controversy" vision. These writings first appeared in print in 1858 under the title *Spiritual Gifts* (vol. 1). Later, in 1884, they were expanded upon and republished as *Spirit of Prophecy* (vol. 4). Finally, in 1888, the book was once again revised and reprinted under the title for which it is known today, the *Great Controversy*. The book predicts such things as the ecumenical movement, the rise of spiritualism, the papacy's takeover of the world, and the passing of national Sunday legislation.

Mrs. White assured her followers that this book came straight from God:

The book *The Great Controversy*, I appreciate above silver or gold, and I greatly desire that it shall come before the people. **While writing the manuscript of *The Great Controversy*, I was often conscious of the presence of the angels of God.**

And many times the scenes about which I was writing were presented to me anew in visions of the night, so that they were fresh and vivid in my mind.¹⁴⁶

With a glowing endorsement like that, it is no surprise that loyal Adventist believers flocked out to purchase the book in droves. Of course, by 1911, there were few Adventists around who were familiar with the events of 1858. So, just what happened that year?

In 1858, a first-day Adventist author named H.L. Hastings published a landmark book entitled ***THE GREAT CONTROVERSY BETWEEN GOD AND MAN: Its origin, progress, and termination***. Yes, a first-day Adventist wrote a "Great Controversy" book prior to Mrs. White. Furthermore, it appears the Whites had a copy of the book and read it *before* Ellen's vision.

The date of Mrs. White's Lovett's Grove vision was March 14, 1858. Interestingly enough, a mere four days later, on March 18, 1858, a review of Hastings' book appeared in James White's *Review* magazine. In order to appear in the March 18 issue, the Whites must have purchased and read the book prior to the paper being prepared for press in early March. The disturbing reality is that the Whites were familiar with Hastings' book **prior** to Mrs. White's vision.

In the *Review* article, the unnamed author (most likely James White, but possibly Uriah Smith) points out that the book needs some improvements:

"And while every one must close the volume with a vivid sense of the manner in which the controversy will close in the triumph of the power and justice of God, and the certainty of this issue, **we could wish that the author had dwelt more at length on the points of man's rebellion, and the terms of**

reconciliation. When he speaks of the way we may approach to “a more glorious mercy-seat,” of the position of Christ “in the heavenly places,” and of the “ark of God’s testament” seen in the temple of heaven, **we could wish he had reminded the revolvers of a certain law that reposes in that ark,** beneath that mercy-seat, which is the constitution of God’s government, and upon which hinges the whole controversy between him and man.”¹⁴⁷

It was not long before James and Ellen began making the necessary improvements to Hastings’ book. A mere six months after the book review appeared, Ellen published her own version of Hastings’ book in *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 1.

In his review of Hastings’ book James had lamented, “we could wish he had reminded the revolvers of a certain law that reposes in that ark.” James and Ellen had the opportunity to improve on Hastings’ lack of attention to the law when they published their own *Great Controversy*. They devoted a whole chapter to the law: Chapter 25, “God’s Law Immutable.”

James had also expressed a wish that Hastings had spent more time “on the points of man’s rebellion, and the terms of reconciliation.” Mrs. White made up for these shortcomings when she published her version of the *Great Controversy*. It has two chapters dealing with these subjects: Chapter 29, “The Origin of Evil” and Chapter 30, “Enmity Between Man and Satan.”

Of course, Mrs. White’s version of the controversy between God and Satan differed according to her unique Seventh-day Adventist beliefs, such as Sunday observance being the mark of the beast. So while it appears she took the structure and some of her ideas from Hastings’ book, the important question is: Do the *unique* SDA teachings

that appear in the *Great Controversy* originate from her Lovett’s Grove vision?

Walter Rea, while researching the *Great Controversy*, discovered that it was Joseph Bates who first advanced the teaching that Sunday observance was the Mark of the Beast in the 1840s, before he met the Whites. The United States in prophecy, the “mark of the beast,” the “image to the beast,” had all come out earlier in James White’s book *Life Incidents*, first published in 1868. Comparison shows that words, sentences, quotations, thoughts, ideas, structures, paragraphs, and even total pages were taken from it and put in *Great Controversy*.¹⁴⁸

Interestingly, much of *Life Incidents* came primarily from J. N. Andrews’ book published in 1860 entitled *The Three Messages of Revelation XIV, 6-12, and particularly The Third Angel’s Message and The Two-Horned Beast*. Thus, many of the predictions later found in the *Great Controversy* were in place *prior* to the writing of that book. It appears the teachings in the *Great Controversy* came from the studies of Joseph Bates, and later, J. N. Andrews and Uriah Smith—not the visions of Ellen White.

This is a disturbing finding given the fact that Ellen White said the book came straight from God:

“God gave me the light contained in *The Great Controversy* and *Patriarchs and Prophets* and this light was needed to arouse the people to prepare for the great day of God, which is just before us. These books contain God’s direct appeal to the people. Thus He is speaking to the people in stirring words, urging them to make ready for His coming. The light God has given in these books should not be concealed.”¹⁴⁹

At the 1919 Conference on the Spirit of Prophecy, church leaders discussed the problems with the book *Great Controversy*:

B. L. House:- As I understand it, elder J. N. Andrews prepared those historical quotations for the old edition [1888 *Great Controversy*], and Brother Robinson and Brother Crisler, Professor Prescott and others furnished the quotations for the new edition. Did she write the historical quotations in there?

A.G. Daniells:- No. ...

W.W. Prescott:- You are touching exactly the experience through which I went, personally, because you all know that I contributed something toward the revision of *Great Controversy*. **I furnished considerable material** bearing upon that question. ... When I talked to W.C. White about it (and I do not know that he is an infallible authority}, he told me frankly that when they got out *Great Controversy*, if they did not find in her writings any thing on certain chapters to make the historical connections, **they took other books, like [Uriah Smith's] *Daniel and the Revelation*, and used portions of them...**

The mystery of the *Great Controversy* is no longer a mystery. Instead of a prophet receiving visions and writing those visions out over the years, we find the book was developed in a far different manner. The book was assembled first from the writings of H.L. Hastings. Added to this were the writings of Adventist theologians, such as J.N. Andrews, Uriah Smith, Robinson, Crisler, and Prescott. Finally, historical quotes were taken from a variety of non-Adventist authors.

In the 1970's, SDA scholar Dr. Don McAdams did his doctoral thesis on the book *Great Controversy*. He notes:

"Ellen White was not just borrowing paragraphs here and there that she ran across in her reading, but in fact following the historians page after page, leaving out much material, but using their sequence, some of their ideas, and often their words. In the examples I have examined **I have found no historical fact in her text that is not in their text.** The hand-written manuscript on John Huss follows the historian so closely that it does not even seem to have gone through an intermediary stage, but rather from the historian's printed page to Mrs. White's manuscript, **including historical errors** and moral exhortations."¹⁵⁰

While many find the *Great Controversy* to be an interesting and thought-provoking book, it can hardly be considered an original work. All of the major themes in the book were developed earlier and written out by other authors, many of them non-Adventists. A considerable part of the book was actually supplied by W.W. Prescott and put together by editors. It is difficult, if not impossible, to point to any idea or historical fact that actually originated with Ellen White. The only conclusion that can be reached is if Mrs. White did indeed receive a vision at Lovett's Grove in 1858, that vision resulted in no new concepts that were not already published!

11

Prophetess at War

For Ellen White, Seventh-day Adventism was a lifelong struggle. It was not so much a struggle against heathenism or atheism. No, it was more of a struggle against Christian religions. It was a struggle against Catholicism, which she perceived to be Babylon, the beast of Revelation. And it was a struggle against Babylon's daughters, apostate Protestantism.

It all started when Ellen Harmon was a frail 16-year old child. Her family members, being strident Millerites, were vociferous in advocating the mistaken teaching that Christ would return in 1844. Apparently some of the Harmon family members were involved in disruptive activities during the worship services of the Methodist church where they were members. After bearing long with the fanatics, the church finally dismissed the troublemakers. The Methodist Church describes the dismissal as follows:

“The reason for their dismissal was **not** that they preached the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is a tenant of our orthodox faith which is confirmed from the Articles of Religion 1784. Their dismissal was occasioned by their breach of discipline in proclaiming the views of William Miller's time-setting. ...**after much quiet counsel to refrain from their disruptive behavior in church meetings** the members of Chestnut Street

Church took what they believed to be their only recourse, to dismiss the Harmon Family.”¹⁵¹

Ellen Harmon's ejection from the Methodist church must have tainted her view of Protestants. This was further enforced as many of the Protestant churches closed their doors to William Miller and his time-setting doctrine. While the Protestant churches had solid Biblical reasons to oppose Miller's time setting¹⁵², there is little doubt that she mistakenly interpreted the opposition to mean that the Protestants did not want Christ to return:

“Many shepherds of the flock, who professed to love Jesus, said that they had no opposition to the preaching of Christ's coming, but they objected to the definite time. God's all-seeing eye read their hearts. They **did not love Jesus** near. They knew that their **unchristian lives** would not stand the test, for they were **not walking in the humble path** marked out by Him.”¹⁵³

Not long after the disappointment of 1844, the Three angels' messages became a central part of Adventist teaching. The second angel's message warned God's people that Babylon had fallen. James White, Joseph Bates, and other Adventist leaders considered both Catholicism and apostate Protestantism to be the second angel's “Babylon” of Revelation 14:8. They saw these Christians religions as a great beast-like persecuting power that would seek to destroy them for keeping the seventh day Sabbath.

Ellen White and other Adventists came to the conclusion that the Sabbath was the **final test** for mankind. Mrs. White wrote,

“The light of the Sabbath was seen, and the people of God were tested, as the children of Israel were tested anciently, to see if they would keep God's law.”¹⁵⁴

New battle lines were drawn. Before the disappointment, the battle had been over the imminent return of Christ. Now a greater battle loomed. It was the battle over the day upon which the believer should worship. This was the final test. Those who went to church on Saturday would make up the 144,000 who would receive the Seal of God and be saved when Christ returned. Those who worshipped on Sunday would receive the Mark of the Beast, and would be destroyed when Jesus returned.

It was not long before the Adventists had gained an unsavory reputation among other Christians. Adventists became known for their efforts to recruit members from other Christian denominations. The problem became so acute that in foreign missions, missionaries from other denominations did not want to work with Adventist missionaries, who they felt were more interested in converting people to the Sabbath than to Christ.

The Whites were still convinced all other Christian churches were apostate because they had rejected Miller's fanatical time-setting movement. Needless to say, the Adventists' hostility towards other Christian denominations generated plenty of animosity between the groups. Ellen White describes her displeasure with the "fallen" Christian denominations:

"I saw that the nominal churches have fallen; that coldness and death reign in their midst."¹⁵⁵

"The sins of the popular churches are whitewashed over. Many of the members indulge in the grossest vices and are steeped in iniquity. Babylon is fallen and has become the cage of every foul and hateful bird! The most revolting sins of the age find shelter beneath the cloak of Christianity."¹⁵⁶

Mrs. White was so upset with Sunday-keeping Christians that she was prepared to pour out the wrath of

God upon them. Here she discusses the situation with her accompanying angel:

"**I saw** that since Jesus left the holy place of the heavenly sanctuary and entered within the second veil, the churches have been filling up with every unclean and hateful bird. I saw great iniquity and vileness in the churches; yet their members profess to be Christians. Their profession, their prayers, and their exhortations are an abomination in the sight of God.

"Said the angel, 'God will not smell in their assemblies. Selfishness, fraud, and deceit are practiced by them without the reprovings of conscience. And over all these evil traits they throw the cloak of religion.' I was shown the pride of the nominal churches. God is not in their thoughts; their carnal minds dwell upon themselves; they decorate their poor mortal bodies, and then look upon themselves with satisfaction and pleasure. Jesus and the angels look upon them in anger.

"Said the angel, 'Their sins and pride have reached unto heaven. Their portion is prepared. Justice and judgment have slumbered long, but will soon awake. Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.' The fearful threatenings of the third angel are to be realized, and all the wicked are to drink of the wrath of God. An innumerable host of evil angels are spreading over the whole land and crowding the churches. These agents of Satan look upon the religious bodies with exultation, for the cloak of religion covers the greatest crime and iniquity."¹⁵⁷

To Ellen White, the non-Adventist churches were full of sin. Just as she often saw her Adventist critics as being full

of sin (chapter 6), it seems that anyone who opposed her agenda was “full of sin.” In her mind, their worst enemies were not atheists, pagans, and infidels. **Their worst enemies were Sunday-keeping Christians!**

Ellen White Devises Sunday Law Doctrine

In the mid-1800s there were a series of incidents where Seventh-day Adventists ran into trouble with the law because they worked on Sunday. In many states there were *blue laws* forbidding work on this day. It was against this background of persecution by the state that prophetess Ellen White describes the coming persecution of Sabbath-keepers in a series of books and articles. She wrote:

“Then I saw the leading men of the earth consulting together, and Satan and his angels busy around them. I saw a writing, copies of which were scattered in different parts of the land, giving orders that unless the saints should yield their peculiar faith, give up the Sabbath, and observe the first day of the week, the people were at liberty after a certain time to put them to death.”¹⁵⁸

This fear of persecution helped to unite the tiny church in its mission. Those who kept the Sabbath were the “saints.” They were at war with Satan, who was busy working with the leaders of church and state to eradicate the much-dreaded Sabbath keepers.

After many decades had passed, and no death decree had materialized, some had probably begun to wonder if this end-time scenario was realistic. There certainly did not appear to be any death decree for Sabbath worship on the horizon. So, in 1884 Mrs. White introduces a new aspect to the doctrine. She indicates there will be a gradual increase in the severity of laws enforcing Sunday observance,

beginning with minor legislation and culminating in the final piece of legislation, the death decree. This was a very important change in the doctrine. Now, every hint of any type of Sunday legislation could be portrayed to believers and unbelievers as evidence of the beginning of events leading up the final grand Sunday law:

“In the last conflict the Sabbath will be the special point of controversy throughout all Christendom. Secular rulers and religious leaders will unite to enforce the observance of the Sunday; and **as milder measures fail, the most oppressive laws will be enacted.** It will be urged that the few who stand in opposition to an institution of the church and a law of the land ought not to be tolerated, and a decree will finally be issued denouncing them as deserving of the severest punishment, and giving the people liberty, after a certain time, to put them to death.”¹⁵⁹

By the late 1880s the end appeared imminent to some Adventists. The reason they believed this was because a law was being considered before the United States Congress in the late 1880s which would have made Sunday a nationally-recognized holiday. This was one of those “milder measures” that was certain to lead up to a death decree against Sabbath keepers. In 1886, Mrs. White sounded the alarm:

“The end of all things is at hand. The time of trouble is about to come upon the people of God. Then it is that the decree will go forth forbidding those who keep the Sabbath of the Lord to buy or sell, and threatening them with punishment, and even death, if they do not observe the first day of the week as the Sabbath.”¹⁶⁰

Then the unexpected happened. Congress defeated the Sunday legislation. While there may have been more than one reason the law was rejected, it was apparent that some in Congress felt the law would violate the separation between church and state guaranteed under the Constitution. Besides, if the law were enacted, the United States Supreme Court would have likely struck it down. After this event, those Christians who had been pushing the Sunday Law holiday legislation gradually turned their attention to other issues. By the early 1900s it appeared unlikely that a Sunday law would be passed any time in the near future. Mrs. White and the Adventists now had a dilemma on their hands. They needed to come up with an explanation as to how a Sunday law could possibly be passed given the current circumstances. Sister White finally came up with an explanation in 1904:

When the Sabbath becomes the special point of controversy throughout Christendom, the persistent refusal of a small minority to yield to the popular demand will make them objects of universal execration. It will be urged that the few who stand in opposition to an institution of the church and a law of the state, ought not to be tolerated; that **it is better for them to suffer than for whole nations to be thrown into confusion and lawlessness**. This argument will appear conclusive; and against those who hallow the Sabbath of the fourth commandment will finally be issued a decree, denouncing them as deserving of the severest punishment, and giving the people liberty, after a certain time, to put them to death.¹⁶¹

By 1904, the scenario of an organized movement of religious leaders pushing Sunday legislation through Congress no longer seemed realistic. Since a Sunday law

now appeared extremely unlikely under *ordinary* circumstances, there must be some *extraordinary* external event that triggers it. Thus, Mrs. White concocts a new scenario in which the United States is faced with a sudden, terrible crisis. If the United States does not act to kill the Sabbath-keepers, there will be a terrible national catastrophe. During this horrific crisis the Sunday law will be justified by politicians who would, under normal circumstances, reject the law. However, in this crisis situation, they are convinced to pass a Sunday law in order to prevent the whole nation from being “thrown into confusion and lawlessness.”

This was another important change to the doctrine. Adventists no longer need look for a gradual, organized movement to gradually pass a Sunday law. It had become all too obvious that scenario was just not going to happen. No, this law would come in the midst of a stupendous crisis. The Adventist people could now be kept in a state of constant fear and expectation. A crisis could come at any time. It could be an economic crisis, a horrific natural disaster, or perhaps a war. Whatever the crisis might be, one thing was certain: It could happen any time, and when it did happen, the Sunday law would soon follow. From this point forward, every economic downturn, every national disaster, every war was seen as evidence that a national Sunday law was imminent.

While we can give credit to Mrs. White for her creativity, she failed to provide any Biblical evidence for this new scenario, nor does she explain how killing the Sabbath keepers could prevent the nation from being thrown into “confusion and lawlessness.” It must be supposed that in a crisis situation, people stop thinking rationally, because killing Sabbath keepers is certainly not a rational solution to any national problem.

In 1904, Mrs. White talked as if only “Christendom” would pass Sunday laws, but by 1911, she had once again changed her new scenario, this time to include the entire world. Mrs. White writes in her landmark book, *Great Controversy*, published in 1911:

“The powers of earth, uniting to war against the commandments of God, will decree that “all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond” (Revelation 13:16), shall conform to the customs of the church by the observance of the false Sabbath. All who refuse compliance will be visited with civil penalties, and it will finally be declared that they are deserving of death.”¹⁶²

This “universal” Sunday law is further expounded upon in Mrs. White’s final book published in 1917, a year following her death:

“In this our day, many of God’s servants, though innocent of wrongdoing, will be given over to suffer humiliation and abuse at the hands of those who, inspired by Satan, are filled with envy and religious bigotry. Especially will the wrath of man be aroused against those who hallow the Sabbath of the fourth commandment; and at last a **universal** decree will denounce these as deserving of death.”¹⁶³

Thus we find the Sunday law doctrine continually evolving and changing over the years to meet the particular challenges of each generation. After the death of the prophetess Ellen White in 1916, the position of the church on the National Sunday Law became frozen and has remained relatively unchanged. This is understandable, since there is no longer anyone with prophetic authority in the church to modify the teaching. The church continues to teach the same doctrine today that was taught in the early 1900s.

The Pope and the Sabbath

When the Adventists first adopted the Sabbath teaching, it was believed that the Pope instigated the change from Sabbath to Sunday. This belief was ratified when the “spirit of prophecy” endorsed it from a vision she received:

“**I saw** that God had not changed the Sabbath, for He never changes. But **the pope had changed it** from the seventh to the first day of the week; for he was to change times and laws.”¹⁶⁴

There is no mistaking what this statement means. She places the blame for the change from Sabbath to Sunday squarely upon the shoulders of the papacy. This was in accordance with the Adventist prophetic interpretation of Daniel 7. According to their understanding, the papacy is the little horn of Daniel 7. According to Adventism’s preeminent prophetic scholar, Uriah Smith, the papacy “has taken hold of the fourth commandment, torn from its place the Sabbath...and erected in its place a rival institution to serve another purpose.”¹⁶⁵

By connecting the change of the day of worship to the papacy, Adventists were thus able to claim that by worshipping on Sunday, one was following after the beast power of Rome. Consequently, any church that observed Sunday—and nearly all churches did—was guilty of bowing to the papal power. Therefore, the only true remnant church was the church that kept the Sabbath and had the “spirit of prophecy”, namely the Seventh-day Adventist church. All other Christians needed to heed the call of the 2nd angel of Revelation 14, leave their churches, and join the “saints” in the Adventist Church, in order to receive the seal of God.

The theory that that Pope changed the day of worship soon ran into trouble. The first Pope began serving in 606

A.D.¹⁶⁶ However, it was discovered that Sunday worship was widely practiced long before this. Some Adventists suggested the change actually occurred under the Roman Emperor Constantine, who issued an edict in 321 A.D. recognizing Sunday as a day of rest in honor of the sun.

It was not until 1977, however, that the disturbing reality of the early advent of Sunday worship among Christians broke upon the Seventh-day Adventist church. It was in that year that an aspiring SDA scholar, Dr. Samuele Bacchiocchi, published his ground-breaking book, *From Sabbath to Sunday*. In the early 1970s, Bacchiocchi was working on doctoral degree at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. Interestingly enough, Bacchiocchi was the **first and only** non-Catholic student ever allowed to study at the university. While there he obtained priceless research material for his book. While it probably was not the purpose of his book to exonerate the Pope, his research showed that the change from Sabbath to Sunday worship occurred far earlier in history than had previously been acknowledged by Adventists. In fact, the change happened long before the papacy was established in power. These findings cast considerable doubt on whether Sunday worship could be considered allegiance to the papacy since the practice was well established throughout Christianity centuries before the first Pope arose.

In 1997, twenty years following the publication of his book, Dr. Bacchiocchi wrote the following:

“I differ from Ellen White, for example, on the origin of Sunday. She teaches that in the first centuries all Christians observed the Sabbath and it was largely through the efforts of Constantine that Sundaykeeping was adopted by many Christians in the fourth century. My research shows otherwise. If you read my essay HOW DID SUNDAYKEEPING BEGIN? which summarizes my dissertation, you

will notice that I place the origin of Sundaykeeping by the time of the Emperor Hadrian, in A.D. 135.¹⁶⁷

While Mrs. White “saw” the Pope changed the day from Sabbath to Sunday, the historical evidence proves otherwise. **Emperor Hadrian (A.D. 135) was nearly half a millennium removed from the first pope who began serving in A.D. 606.** Not only does this cast doubt on Mrs. White’s credibility, but also it raises questions about the entire system of Adventist prophetic interpretation.

Sunday Persecution

In the 1800s a few Seventh-day Adventists managed to get themselves arrested and imprisoned for brief periods for violating laws forbidding work on Sunday. Two of their publishing houses, one in London and one in Basil, Switzerland, were closed for disregarding Sunday laws and laws regulating the hours of female labor. At that time many Adventists regarded it as a violation of the fourth Commandment to rest on Sunday. The reasoning behind their refusal to cease from work is found in the fourth Commandment itself: “Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work.” They interpreted this to mean they were under a requirement from God to work six days a week. Therefore, they felt it was a violation of God’s commandment and a renunciation of their faith to cease working on Sunday.

There was a rift in the church on this subject. Some in the church questioned the necessity of purposely inciting local authorities by working on Sunday. They proposed that Adventists comply with the local laws forbidding Sunday labor. Finally, a small crisis occurred in Australia in the early 1900’s. There was a law requiring the closing of certain businesses, including publishing houses, in Melbourne on Sundays. After receiving notice of the law the Adventists continued to operate their publishing facility

for three Sundays. Finally, local authorities threatened them with arrest. Adventists were now faced with an important decision. Was it worth being arrested to prove their point about working six days a week? Adventist leaders turned to their prophetess, Mrs. White, who provided a testimony from the “light” given her “by the Lord” to solve the crisis:

“The **light given me by the Lord** at a time when we were expecting just such a crisis as you seem to be approaching was that when the people were moved by a power from beneath to enforce Sunday observance, Seventh-day Adventists were to show their wisdom by **refraining from their ordinary work on that day**, devoting it to missionary effort.

“At one time those in charge of our school at Avondale inquired of me, saying: ‘What shall we do? The officers of the law have been commissioned to arrest those working on Sunday.’ I replied: ‘It will be very easy to avoid that difficulty. Give Sunday to the Lord as a day for doing missionary work. Take the students out to **hold meetings** in different places, and to **do medical missionary work**. They will find the people at home and will have a splendid opportunity to present the truth. **This way of spending Sunday is always acceptable to the Lord.**’”¹⁶⁸

Notice that Mrs. White directs Adventists to keep Sunday the same way all conscientious Sunday observers do! She instructs Adventists to:

- 1) Hold religious “meetings”
- 2) Do “missionary work”
- 3) Refrain “from their ordinary work on that day”

Furthermore, the prophetess assures them that “this way of spending Sunday is always acceptable to the Lord.”

It appears that the threat of arrest was enough to convert the Adventist prophetess to Sunday observance! She says that holding religious meetings, refraining from ordinary work, and doing missionary work is an acceptable way for Adventists to spend Sunday. Therefore, if it is “acceptable to the Lord” for Adventists to do such, then it must also be acceptable for Baptists, Catholics, Methodists, Lutherans, Pentecostals, Presbyterians, and other Christians to do the same. Therefore, how could Sunday-keeping Christians receive the Mark of the Beast for observing Sunday when God’s prophet said that this type of Sunday observance is “acceptable to the Lord?” If Sunday-keeping Christians receive the Mark of the Beast for spending Sunday in religious meetings and doing missionary work, it logically follows that Adventists will also receive the Mark of the Beast for doing the same!

The next question raised is this: If Adventists were to follow the counsel of their prophet, how will they possibly be persecuted for violating Sunday laws? What reason could Sunday-keepers possibly come up with to persecute and kill people who are holding religious meetings and doing missionary work on Sunday? Since Adventists will be holding religious meetings and doing missionary work on Sunday it will be impossible to distinguish them from Sunday worshippers! Therefore, it will be impossible to arrest them and impossible to prosecute them!

Why should Adventists fear persecution from a future Sunday law? They have already been given instructions that will prevent them from ever being persecuted for working on Sunday. This testimony invalidates the entire persecution scenario found in the *Great Controversy*. If a Sunday law is ever passed, Adventists will not be hiding in the woods or mountains. They will be holding religious

meetings on Sunday and doing missionary work. The authorities will see that what the Adventists are doing is the exact same thing the Baptists and Catholics next door are doing. There will be no arrests and no persecution. It will be a non-event.

When faced with the threat of the arrest of church members, Mrs. White seems to have caved in and invented instructions for Sunday observance which make it virtually impossible for any Seventh-day Adventist to get arrested under any possible Sunday law scenario. However, there is a *real* threat of persecution that is evident in the world today. It is not a persecution based upon a day of worship. It is a persecution based upon a profession of faith in Jesus Christ. Today there are Adventists, Baptists, Catholics, Lutherans, Methodists, Pentecostals, and Presbyterians and other Christians who are being martyred around the world because they stand up for their faith in Jesus Christ. In the time it took for you to read this chapter, a Christian was martyred for his faith in Jesus.

12

Alterations, Revisions, Changes

Mrs. White's statement about the amalgamation of man and beast was not only one of the most controversial she ever penned, it was also one of the most embarrassing to the church. In 1864 Mrs. White wrote the following:

"But if there was one sin above another which called for the destruction of the race by the flood, it was the base crime of amalgamation of man and beast which defaced the image of God, and caused confusion everywhere."¹⁶⁹

"Every species of animal which God had created were preserved in the ark. The confused species which God did not create, which were the result of amalgamation, were destroyed by the flood. Since the flood there has been amalgamation of man and beast, as may be seen in the almost endless varieties of species of animals, and in certain races of men."¹⁷⁰

Notice how Mrs. White describes amalgamation as "a sin" serious enough to require "the destruction" of the human race. She says it was a vile, "base crime" that "defaced the image of God." She tells us it occurred both before *and* after "the flood," and that its effects can be seen "in certain races of men."

Mrs. White's statement seems to indicate that she believed the sexual union between man and beast before

and after the flood produced different, amalgamated species. This was an old myth that circulated among the uneducated in the 19th century and has no scientific basis. In fact, science has since proven that it is impossible for humans and animals to produce offspring.

The fact that the myth of amalgamation was circulating in the early 19th century is substantiated by the fictitious *Book of Jasher*, published in 1844—a book some critics say Mrs. White used to glean material for her books (see chapter 9). In the book's account of the pre-flood era we find these words:

“And their judges and rulers went to the daughters of men and took their wives by force from their husbands according to their choice, and the sons of men in those days took from the cattle of the earth, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, and **taught the mixture of animals of one species with the other...**”¹⁷¹

Regardless of its source, Mrs. White's statements raised some serious questions among Adventists, such as, which race is a product of amalgamation? Mrs. White said the results of amalgamation could be seen “in certain races of men.” Surely, since their prophetess had apparently seen this in vision, she must be able to provide more insight into who was an amalgamation.

That question can best be answered by elders B.F. Snook and W.H. Brinkerhoff, leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist church in Iowa. James White ordained both men in 1862. It did not take long for them to realize they had made a serious mistake. By 1865, Snook and Brinkerhoff were questioning the inspiration of Ellen White. In 1866, they published a book that not only unveiled the errors in Mrs. White's visions, but also exposed the racist views she held at that time:

These visions teach that the Negro race is not human. This charge they deny, but we will let the reader decide for himself. Here is what she says; “Since the flood there has been amalgamation of man and beast, as may be seen in the almost endless varieties of species, and in certain races of men.”—*Sp. Gifts*. Vol. 3, p. 75. But what are we to understand by certain races of men? She has not informed us in her writings, but left us to fix the stigma of amalgamation where we may see fit. But the interpretation has come to light. **She told it to her husband, and he made it known to Eld. Ingraham, and he divulged the secret to the writer, that Sister White had seen that God never made the Darkey.**¹⁷²

Of course, Adventist leaders denied this charge, but with no other explanation available, the charge seemed to have some merit. Some of Mrs. White's own statements seem to substantiate the allegations. Some Christian leaders, believing the Negro race to be every bit as human as the Caucasian race, called for equal rights among races within the church. Mrs. White showed little interest:

“The Colored People should not urge that they be placed on an equality with White People. ... The work of proclaiming the truth for this time is not to be hindered by an effort to adjust the position of the Negro race.”¹⁷³

Thus, it was deemed of little importance to improve the position of the “colored people.” She apparently decided the injustice of racism—one of the greatest social ills of her era—was an issue that might hinder their proclamation of the “truth.” And what were these important truths that were not to be hindered? During this period Mrs. White wrote voluminously on the weighty subjects of having the proper

dress length, the dangers of self-abuse, and not wearing jewelry—while she had little to say about racism. To her credit, Mrs. White did support the evangelization of the “colored people” with the “truth,” and she forbid the exclusion of “colored people” from places of worship; however, she strictly forbid marriage between the races.¹⁷⁴

Stinging criticism of Ellen White’s amalgamation statement in the 1860s forced church leaders to defend their prophetess. In 1868, four years after the amalgamation statements first appeared in print, Adventist leader Uriah Smith (who at that time still professed belief in Mrs. White as a prophet) published his spirited defense of her. In his book he conjectured that the union of man with beast had created races such as the “wild Bushmen of Africa, some tribes of the Hottentots, and perhaps the Digger Indians of our own country, etc.”¹⁷⁵

James White “carefully” reviewed Smith’s book prior to its publication, and then recommended it in glowing terms to the readers of the church’s official magazine, the *Review and Herald*:

“The Association has just published a pamphlet entitled, *The Visions of Mrs. E.G. White, A Manifestation of Spiritual Gifts According to the Scriptures*. It is written by the editor of the *Review*. While carefully reading the manuscript, I felt grateful to God that our people could have this able defense of those views they so much love and prize, which others despise and oppose.”¹⁷⁶

James White makes it abundantly clear that Smith did not publish this book without careful review. It is inconceivable that the statements about the Indians and the Bushmen of Africa passed by James White without notice. His endorsement indicates his approval of the explanation. In fact, because it established Mrs. White’s claims, James and

Ellen took 2,000 copies of Smith’s book with them to peddle at camp meetings that year!¹⁷⁷ By promoting and selling Smith’s book, the Whites placed their stamp of approval on his explanation of the amalgamation statement.

While the “Bushmen of Africa” explanation was good enough for the Whites and Smith, it eventually fell out of favor with Seventh-day Adventist leaders. The statement was republished in 1870 in the book *Spirit of Prophecy*, Volume 1, and continued to generate controversy. It became progressively more difficult to explain these statements to an increasingly-educated and racially-tolerant denomination.

Even though James and Ellen White, Uriah Smith, her son W.C. White, and her secretary D.D. Robinson never had any doubt that Ellen had meant the interbreeding of man with beast,¹⁷⁸ later defenders of Mrs. White in recent years would go to great lengths to convince people that the amalgamation statement referred to the intermarriage between the races—human with human. This explanation, however, raised more questions than answers. How could intermarriage between human races deface the image of God in man? How could one human (made in the image of God) married to another human (made in the image of God) deface the image of God? If intermarriage between races is a “sin” and a “base crime,” then why is it never described as such in the Bible? Many Biblical scholars believe Moses’ wife Zipporah was a different race. Were the children of Moses an amalgamated species? If so, why did God offer to make his children into a great nation? Why didn’t God destroy them for committing a base crime?

A base crime is an act of vile immorality. Here is how the word is described in the 1913 Webster’s Dictionary:

Morally low. Hence: Low-minded; unworthy; without dignity of sentiment; ignoble; mean; illiberal; menial; as, a base fellow; base motives;

base occupations. A cruel act of a base and a cowardish mind.¹⁷⁹

Mrs. White used the phrase “base crime” only one other time in her writings. She used the phrase to describe Potiphar’s wife’s vile, adulterous attempt upon the youthful Joseph.¹⁸⁰

How could marriage relationships between those of different races or those of different religions be described as base crimes? Since when are sexual relations between married human partners considered base crimes? Doesn’t God honor marriage, whether or not both partners are of the same race or religion?

The Bible is very clear that sexual relations between humans and animals is a vile, base crime. It is condemned in the Bible as an “abomination” worthy of the death penalty.¹⁸¹ The fact that Mrs. White describes amalgamation as a base crime is irrefutable evidence she was describing bestiality, not intermarriage between humans of differing racial or religious backgrounds.

Further questions were raised by Mrs. White’s statement that amalgamation was the greatest reason for the flood. If Ellen White is correct, that the “one sin above another which called for the destruction of the race” was amalgamation, then why was that sin never mentioned in Genesis? Moses mentions the sins of corruption and violence (Gen. 6:11-13), but never amalgamation. One would think that if amalgamation was the “one sin above another” that caused the flood, Moses would have at least mentioned it! How could such a heinous sin pass by Moses without mention?

The statement became so controversial that it was finally “whited out” when the book was republished in 1890, under the title *Patriarchs and Prophets*. After publication of the book, some astute Adventists observed that the statements were missing. To many it seemed an implicit

admission that the statements were indeed false. Believers in Mrs. White questioned why these “inspired” words were removed from the newest release. If the amalgamation statements were true, why not leave them in the book? Why remove them? If this sin caused the flood then people should be aware of it so that they do not repeat it. If the “Bushmen of Africa” resulted from the union between man and animals, people have the right to know about it. Scientists should be made aware of this fact so that they can study these people. After all, what precedence is there for deleting the writings of a prophet? None of the Biblical prophets had to go back and alter their writings to remove statements. Why should Mrs. White?

The removal of the amalgamation statements created such a controversy, that the White Estate decided it was important for them to provide an explanation for the omissions. Her son W.C. White attempts to explain:

“Regarding the two paragraphs which are to be found in *Spiritual Gifts* and also in *The Spirit of Prophecy* regarding amalgamation and the reason why they were left out of the later books, and the question as to who took the responsibility of leaving them out, I can speak with perfect clearness and assurance. They were left out by Ellen G. White. No one connected with her work had any authority over such a question, and I never heard of anyone offering to her counsel regarding this matter.

“In all questions of this kind, you may set it down as a certainty that sister White was responsible for leaving out or adding to matters of this sort in the later editions of our books.

“Sister White not only had good judgment based upon a clear and comprehensive understanding of conditions and of the natural consequences of

publishing what she wrote, but **she had many times direct instruction from the angel of the Lord regarding what should be omitted and what should be added in new editions.**”¹⁸²

In this letter W.C. White informs us that it is likely that an angel instructed Ellen White to omit the amalgamation statements in the next edition of the book. That raises another question: Why didn’t the angel instruct her to omit the lines *before* they were published in the first book? It certainly would have saved a lot of explaining, a lot of confusion, and a lot of controversy!

Adventists continued to defend the amalgamation statement as a union of man and beast until 1947 when an Adventist biologist named Dr. Frank Marsh convinced a panel of Seventh-day Adventists that this was not possible. This came decades after scientists had proven that man cannot interbreed with animals.¹⁸³

The Herod Blunder

The amalgamation statement was not the first time a prophetic insight had to be filtered from one of Mrs. White’s books. In *Spiritual Gifts* volume one, published in 1858, Mrs. White writes about Herod as if the same Herod who took part in Christ’s trial also killed James:

“Herod’s heart had grown still harder; and when he heard that Christ had risen, he was not much troubled. He took the life of James, and when he saw that this pleased the Jews, he took Peter also, intending to put him to death.”¹⁸⁴

After Mrs. White published this statement, it was discovered that Herod *Antipas* took part in the trial of Christ, and Herod *Agrippa* put James to death. Herod

Antipas was banished to Lyons in France, by Caligula in AD 41. The provinces which he governed were then given to Herod *Agrippa*, who put James to death, cast Peter in prison, and was smitten of God and died in AD 44 (Acts 7). This gaffe was corrected when this part of the book was republished in 1878 under the title *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 3:

“He [Herod] seized upon James and cast him into prison, and there sent an executioner to kill him with a sword, as **another** Herod had caused the prophet John to be beheaded. He then became bolder, seeing that the Jews were well pleased with his acts, and imprisoned Peter.”¹⁸⁵

This little blunder was an eye-opener for her faithful followers. It was now apparent that Mrs. White had merely copied this mistake from another author. Her blunder must have disappointed her followers who believed she was recording scenes she had witnessed in vision. After all, hadn’t she claimed that all her writing material came straight from heaven?

“You know how the Lord has manifested Himself through the spirit of prophecy. Past, present, and future have passed before me. ... I do not write one article in the paper expressing merely my own ideas. They are what God has opened before me in vision—the precious rays of light shining from the throne.” “The Holy Spirit traced these truths upon my heart and mind.”¹⁸⁶

Mrs. White even went so far as to claim that the Holy Spirit was the author of her books: “The Holy Ghost is the Author of the Scriptures and of the Spirit of Prophecy.”¹⁸⁷ If Mrs. White were an ordinary Christian author, her mistake would have been passed by with little notice. However, when you are a prophetess of God and you claim

the Holy Spirit is the author of your writings, people are going to have high expectations regarding the accuracy of your books. Naturally her followers were disappointed when they learned that not all of Sister White's writings were coming to her through visions of the "past, present, and future." They were left in confusion, wondering how to decipher what parts of her writings came from God and what parts came from uninspired sources. As with her other blunders, time has healed the wound. The original books went out of print and few Adventists today are aware of the Herod blunder.

A new era begins

After the death of James White, a new era began in the writing of Ellen White. Prior to his death, he had assisted her in editing books and articles for publication. Now she needed a new assistant, and one was found in the talented Marian Davis, who took over editing for Mrs. White in 1881. Fannie Bolton joined her staff in 1887. Together these ladies would assist Mrs. White in assembling some of her most famous books, including *Steps to Christ* and *Desire of Ages*.

Fannie Bolton not only wrote books for Mrs. White; she also wrote articles and some letters under Mrs. White's name. She confessed to Merritt G. Kellogg, half-brother of John Harvey Kellogg that what she wrote was...

"published in the *Review and Herald*...as having been written by Sister White under inspiration of God...I am greatly distressed over this matter, for I feel that I am acting a deceptive part. The people are being deceived about the inspiration of what I write. I feel that it is a great wrong that anything which I write should go out under Sister White's name as an article specially inspired of God. What I write

should go out over my own signature[;] then credit would be given where credit belongs."¹⁸⁸

After 1881, church leaders scrutinized Mrs. White's writings much more closely to avoid costly and embarrassing statements, such as those on amalgamation. Church officials even went so far as to pass a resolution of the General Conference in 1883, which created a committee to oversee revisions in her writings:

"33. WHEREAS, Many of these testimonies were written under the most unfavorable circumstances, the writer being too heavily pressed with anxiety and labor to devote critical thought to the grammatical perfection of the writings, and they were printed in such haste as to allow these imperfections to pass uncorrected; and, WHEREAS, we believe the light given by God to His servants is by the enlightenment of the mind, thus imparting the thoughts, and not (except in rare cases) the very words in which the ideas should be expressed; therefore, Resolved, That in the republication of these volumes, such verbal changes be made as to remove the above-named imperfections, as far as possible, without in any measure changing the thought; and further,

34. Resolved, That this body appoint a committee of five to take charge of the republication of these volumes according to the above preambles and resolutions."¹⁸⁹

The General Conference leaders apparently believed they had a right to alter Mrs. White's writings; however, 22 years later, in 1905, Mrs. White claimed that the words she wrote came from God and were not to be changed:

“The word given me is, ‘You are faithfully to reprove those who would mar the faith of the people of God. Write out the things which I shall give you, that they may stand as a witness to the truth till the end of time.’ I said, ‘If any of the citizens of Battle Creek wish to know what Mrs. White believes and



teaches, let them read her published books. My labors would be naught should I preach another gospel. **That which I have written is what the Lord has bidden me write. I have not been instructed to change that which I have sent out.**"¹⁹⁰

Even though God had not instructed Ellen White to change the words she had sent out, church leaders took the prerogative upon themselves to do so. Past mistakes had taught them that it was too risky to allow her writings to go out without close scrutiny.

Mrs. White said, "I am not to retract one word of the message I have borne."¹⁹¹ Despite this assurance, a number of her words have been retracted and removed from later publications. For example:

1. Statements referring to the shut door of salvation.
2. Statements which have been proven false by science, such as amalgamation.
3. An entire chapter of the *Great Controversy* (chapter 12 "God Honoreth the Humble").
4. Entire books have been taken out of print, such as *An Appeal to Mothers* (see chapter 4), a mythical book about the dangers of "self-abuse."

If Mrs. White was not authorized by God to retract one word from the message she bore, who authorized the changes to her writings? In 1992, the official Seventh-day Adventist magazine, the *Review*, revealed the practice of the staff of the White Estate in revising and altering her writings. Paul A. Gordon, then secretary of the White Estate, writes:

"Is it legitimate to change, abridge, or simplify Ellen White's writings? **The answer is yes. We can**

change, abridge, or simplify the words, but we do not have license to change the intended message. Here's why: Seventh-day Adventists do not hold to verbal inspiration. That means we do not believe that God dictated the words for Ellen White to use. ... In the years since Mrs. White's death in 1915, more than 50 new compilations or editions of Ellen White's books have been prepared by the E.G. White Estate. In every case—including editions that have been abridged, condensed, or simplified—the intended message has never been lost, only **the wording has been changed.**"¹⁹²

Despite the assurances that the changes would not impact the intended message, some Adventists believe that the alterations were far more significant than just a word here or there. In 1919 a conference of Seventh-day Adventist leaders was held to discuss what to do with the writings of Ellen White. During that conference college president W.W. Prescott mentions the changes he was working on and how those changes left him with doubts regarding the inspiration of Mrs. White's writings:

"Here's my difficulty. I have gone over this (*The Great Controversy*) and suggested changes that ought to be made in order to correct statements. These changes have been accepted. My personal difficulty will be to retain faith on those things that I cannot deal with on that basis. ... If we correct it here and correct it there, how are we going to stand with it in the other places?"¹⁹³

This was not the first time W.W. Prescott raised the alarm over problems in Mrs. White's books. In 1915, he wrote a personal letter to her son W.C. White:

"The way your mother's writings have been handled and the false impressions concerning them, which is

still fostered among the people, have brought great perplexity and trial to me. **It seems to me that what amounts to deception, though probably not intentional, has been practiced in making some of her books, and that no serious effort has been made to disabuse the minds of the people of what was known to be their wrong view concerning her writings.**"

Prescott was deeply troubled by the way Mrs. White's books were being handled. He was certainly in a position to know how her books were being handled. In addition to working on *The Great Controversy*, he had assisted with other books. According to C.C. Crisler, long-time secretary of the White Estate, Prescott's help was needed in preparing *Prophets and Kings*, which was published in 1917, one year after Mrs. White's death. Crisler asked Prescott for help in a letter dated Dec. 27, 1907:

"In the preparation of this series [*Prophets and Kings*], we felt the need of counsel, and often wished that we could have the help of those who were familiar with the period of the Exile and the Restoration from Babylon . . . We greatly desire that you shall read the remaining articles, and **eliminate any portions that you fear may do more harm than good.** As you will note, some points have been safe-guarded, others have been omitted, and, in some instances positions have been taken... We realize very keenly our inability to see many points that should be closely scrutinized; and hence we feel the need of critical help."

This letter reveals the extent of the changes. Contrary to what the White Estate would lead us to believe, Prescott had the authority to omit and eliminate entire sections of Ellen White's writings if he thought they would cause harm

to the church. This raises the question of whether the people at the White Estate truly believed they were dealing with inspired writings from a prophet of God.

Following are a few examples of alterations to Mrs. White's writings:

Revised Ellen White	Original Ellen White
"I testify to my brethren and sisters that the church of Christ, enfeebled and defective as it may be, is the only object on earth on which He bestows His supreme regard." <i>Testimonies to Ministers & Gospel Workers</i> , p.15.	"The church of Christ is the only object on the earth upon which he bestows his supreme regard; yet it has grown feeble and inefficient through selfishness. " <i>Review & Herald</i> , December 11, 1888.
"More deaths have been caused by drug-taking than from all other causes combined." <i>Selected Messages</i> , Vol. 2, p.450.	" I was shown that more deaths have been caused by drug-taking than from all other causes combined." <i>Spiritual Gifts</i> , Vol. 3-4, p.133.
"More than this, the pope has been given the very titles of Deity. He has been styled 'Lord God the Pope,' and has been declared infallible." <i>The Great Controversy</i> , p.48 [50-51].	"More than this, the pope has arrogated the very titles of Deity. He styles himself 'Lord God the Pope,' assumes infallibility and demands that all men pay him homage. " <i>Spirit of Prophecy</i> , Vol. 4, p.53

We have no way of judging how many statements have been altered, modified, or omitted *prior* to their publication.

As we conclude this book, we must truly admit that a tremendous amount of effort has been put into covering up the mistakes, failures, and blunders of Mrs. White. Many of her books, published late in her life, are held up as examples of Divine inspiration. However, these are the very books that were written with the most editing and revising

from her staff of talented writers, under the oversight of the General Conference Committee. It appears that the quality of God's messages to His people experienced a dramatic improvement once the church got the right people involved in the process.

What the evidence shows, is that from the beginning of her career in the 1840s down through the current era, Ellen White's writings have been manipulated by church officials who felt compelled to cover up her mistakes in order to defend and sustain her role as a prophet. The prevailing attitude among church administrators seems to be that if the vast amount of her plagiarism, mistakes, failures, and blunders are made known to the laity, there will be large-scale desertions from the church. Thus, to preserve the church, these mistakes have been swept under the carpet and not mentioned, leaving the laity ignorant of the facts --- and wholly unaware that they have been led to believe a White lie.

Suggested Reading

Prophetess of Health by Dr. Ronald Numbers, 1992—This book explodes the myths surrounding Ellen White and her health reform visions. Find out the real sources for Mrs. White's health messages. Written by former Loma Linda professor of Medical History, Dr. Ronald Numbers. A must read for any Seventh-day Adventist serious about learning the truth about Mrs. White. Order online at <http://www.ellenwhite.com/order.htm>

Life of Mrs. E.G. White, Seventh-day Adventist Prophet, Her False Claims Refuted, by D.M. Canright, 1916—A high-ranking Seventh-day Adventist official and co-worker with Ellen and James White for over 25 years, D.M. Canright, an SDA insider, exposes what went into the making of a prophet. This is the definitive book on Ellen White. Order online at <http://www.ellenwhite.org/order.htm>

The White Lie by Walter Rea, 1983—Shocking expose of Ellen White's plagiarism. Find out why the SDA church was so concerned about the publication of this book. Learn why pastor Rea, with over 40 years service in the SDA church, was unceremoniously booted out. This ground-breaking book forced SDA church leaders to admit that Ellen White's copying was much more extensive than they had previously admitted. Order online at <http://www.ellenwhite.com/order.htm>

The Cultic Doctrine of Seventh-day Adventists by Dale Ratzlaff, 1997—With cunning accuracy this former SDA pastor of over 30 years pierces the armor of the SDA church to show the theological weakness of its positions on the investigative judgment, the sanctuary, and the writings of Ellen White. This book may single-handedly bring down the teetering mass of false theology in the SDA church. Order online at <http://www.ratzlaf.com/>

Notes

¹ Ellen White, *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 35.

² Ellen White, *Testimonies*, Vol. 1, p. 13.

³ According to Smith, his followers were the saints of God and all other churches were "heathen" or Gentiles.

⁴ *The People Called Shakers*, pp. 152-153.

⁵ Ronald Numbers, *Prophetess of Health*, pp. 16-18.

⁶ J.N. Loughborough, *The Great Second Advent Movement*, p. 145.

⁷ *Manuscript Releases 17*, pp. 96-97, Ms 131, 1906, pp. 1, 4-6. Ellen G. White Estate Washington, D. C. (released June 4, 1987).

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 95-96.

¹⁰ William E. Foy, *The Christian Experience of William E. Foy*, 1845, p. 20.

¹¹ *The Day-Star*, January 24, 1846, "Letter from Sister Harmon, Portland, Me., Dec. 20, 1845."

¹² Adventist historian J.N. Loughborough, in his book *The Great Second Advent Movement* describes the process by which Ellen Harmon was selected as God's prophet. Loughborough claims that God picked Foy as the first person to receive visions. After Foy failed to fulfill his commission he sickened and died, and the *prophetic baton* passed to Hazen Foss, who then received a vision. After Foss refused to relate his vision, God turned to the "weakest of the weak," Ellen Harmon. There are many problems with this reasoning. First and foremost, Foy did not die shortly after the disappointment as supposed by Loughborough. Foy continued in the Christian ministry pastoring various Freewill Baptist churches throughout Maine, witnessing for the Lord throughout his life until his death on November 9, 1893 at the age of 75. His tombstone can be viewed in Birch Tree Cemetery in East Sullivan, Maine. Secondly, the fact that Foy's visions indicate life after death would lead many Adventists to question whether Foy's visions actually came from God (see Foy, pp. 11-12).

¹³ Numbers, p. 18.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ James White, *Word to the Little Flock*, p. 22, 1847.

¹⁷ Ellen White, *Early Writings*, p. 21.

¹⁸ Isaac Wellcome, *History of the Second Advent Message* (Yarmouth, Maine: Advent Christian Publication Society, 1874); Jacob Brinkerhoff, *The Seventh-day Adventists and Mrs. White's Visions* (Marion, Iowa: *Advent and Sabbath Advocate*, 1884), 4-6.

- ¹⁹ Miles Grant, *An Examination of Mrs. Ellen White's Visions*, Boston: Published by the Advent Christian Publication Society, 1877.
- ²⁰ James White, 1846. Quoted in Arthur Patrick (La Sierra University), "Ellen White, the Adventist Church, and its Religion Teachers: A Call for Transformed Relationships".
- ²¹ *Ibid.*
- ²² James and Ellen White, *A Word to the Little Flock*, 1847, p. 21.
- ²³ Arthur White, *Ellen G. White: The Early Years Volume 1 - 1827-1862*, p. 113.
- ²⁴ Arthur White, p. 113.
- ²⁵ Mrs. Truesdail's letter, Jan 27, 1891.
- ²⁶ Joseph Bates, *The Typical and Anti-typical Sanctuary*, p. 10, 1850.
- ²⁷ Joseph Bates, *A Seal of the Living God*, 1849.
- ²⁸ Ellen White, *Present Truth*, Sept. 1849.
- ²⁹ *Present Truth*, April, 1850.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*
- ³¹ Ellen White, *Early Writings*, pp. 64-67.
- ³² Ellen White, *Experience & Views*, pp. 46-47.
- ³³ Ellen White, *Testimonies*, Vol. 1, p. 131
- ³⁴ Ellen White, MS 34, 1885. The White Estate has not released this document. The copies on file at the White Estate are not originals. W.C. White and D.E. Robinson wrote a document (DF 360A) entitled "Counsels Regarding Parenthood" in the 1930s in which they acknowledge this testimony.
- ³⁵ "The Story of Ellen White's Suppressed Testimony," *Limboline*, (Glendale, Calif: Church of the Advent Fellowship), Jan. 7, 1984, pp. 10,11.
- ³⁶ *Advent Herald*, Dec. 11, 1844.
- ³⁷ *Voice of Truth*, Feb. 19, 1845.
- ³⁸ M.A. Branch, *The Autobiography of Gilbert Cranmer*.
- ³⁹ Joseph Bates, *Second Advent Waymarks*, 1847, pp. 97-110.
- ⁴⁰ Letter from Lucinda Burdick, Bridgeport, Connecticut, Sep. 26, 1908.
- ⁴¹ Miles Grant, *An Examination of Mrs. Ellen White's Visions*, Boston: Advent Christian Publication Society, 1877.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*
- ⁴³ Robert Coulter, *The Story of the Church of God (Seventh Day)* (1983, Bible Advocate Press: Denver, Co.), pp. 12-13.
- ⁴⁴ Ellen White, *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 5, p. 97
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

- ⁴⁶ DF 105, Otis Nichols to William Miller, April 20, 1846. (Taken from *The Early Years*, Volume 1, pp. 75-76.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁸ *A Word to the Little Flock*, 1847. Note: Ellen White's earliest visions were printed in the *DayStar* in 1846. Her letters to Enoch Jabobs, editor, were dated during the winter of 1845.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2.
- ⁵⁰ W.H. Brinkerhoff, *Hope of Israel*, July 24, 1866.
- ⁵¹ *Present Truth*, August, 1849.
- ⁵² Letter 4, 1850, pp. 1, 2.
- ⁵³ *Present Truth*, April, 1850.
- ⁵⁴ *Present Truth*, May, 1850.
- ⁵⁵ James White, AR, August, 1850, (*Early Years*, p. 191).
- ⁵⁶ George Butler, *Review and Herald*, April 7, 1885.
- ⁵⁷ Letter from Lucinda Burdick, Bridgeport, Connecticut, Sept. 26, 1908.
- ⁵⁸ *Selected Messages*, Vol. 1, p. 53.
- ⁵⁹ W. Phelps, *Hope of Israel*, letter to the editor, Aug. 21, 1866.
- ⁶⁰ D.M. Canright, *The Life of Ellen White*, chapter 8, 1919.
- ⁶¹ *Advent Review*, Dec. 26, 1882.
- ⁶² *Early Writings*, preface.
- ⁶³ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Vol. 1, p. 63.
- ⁶⁴ Bruce Weaver, *Adventist Currents*, "The Arrest and Trial of Israel Dammon", Vol. 3, No. 1, 1988.
- ⁶⁵ *Piscataquis Farmer*, Mar. 7, 1845.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁷⁰ Ellen White, *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 2, pp. 40-41, 1860.
- ⁷¹ *Piscataquis Farmer*, Mar. 7, 1845.
- ⁷² Weaver, *Adventist Currents*.
- ⁷³ *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 2, pp. 41-42, 1860.
- ⁷⁴ *Piscataquis Farmer*, Mar. 7, 1845.
- ⁷⁵ Miles Grant, *An Examination of Mrs. Ellen White's Visions*, Boston: Advent Christian Publication Society, 1877.
- ⁷⁶ Bruce Weaver, *Adventist Currents*.
- ⁷⁷ Rowe, *Thunder and Trumpets*, p. 147, as quoted in Jonathan Butler, "The Making of a New Order", *The Disappointed*, p. 197.
- ⁷⁸ Ellen White, *Signs of the Times*, Aug. 27, 1894.

⁷⁹ In *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 8, p. 229, Mrs. White claimed she “never crept...and have ever opposed it.” She said that those who crept were “inconsistent fanatical ones.”

⁸⁰ *Piscataquis Farmer*, Mar. 7, 1845.

⁸¹ Ellen White, Manuscript 5a, 1850; July 1850 from East Hamilton, N.Y.

⁸² Ellen White to Brother and Sister Haskell, Oct. 10, 1900.

⁸³ Miles Grant, *An Examination of Mrs. Ellen White's Visions*, Boston: Advent Christian Publication Society, 1877.

⁸⁴ *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 5, pp. 95-97.

⁸⁵ Hebrews 10:19,20. For a thorough discussion of the subject, see Desmond Ford's book, *Daniel 8:14*.

⁸⁶ According to the Bible, the altar of incense is in the **Holy Place**: “And he put the golden altar in the tent of the congregation **before the veil**: And he burnt sweet incense thereon...” Ex. 40:26,27

⁸⁷ Ellen White, *Signs of the Times*, Apr. 22, 1889.

⁸⁸ Miles Grant, *An Examination of Mrs. Ellen White's Visions*, Boston: Published by the Advent Christian Publication Society, 1877.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ Ellen White, *Testimonies*, Vol. 1, pp. 430-431.

⁹¹ Moses Hull, *Hope of Israel*, Vol. 1, no. 18, Sep. 7, 1864.

⁹² D.M. Canright, *Life of Mrs. E.G. White Seventh-day Adventist Prophet: Her False Claims Refuted*, p. 144.

⁹³ Charles Lee, *Three Important Questions for Seventh-Day Adventists to Consider* (1876).

⁹⁴ *Hope of Israel*, Sep. 7, 1864.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

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⁹⁷ Ellen White, *An Appeal to the Youth*, pp. 63,64.

⁹⁸ Ellen White, *Testimonies*, Vol. 2, p. 625.

⁹⁹ E.W. Waters, *Hope of Israel*, letter to the editor, Nov. 16, 1864, vol. 1 no. 22.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ Ellen White, *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 13, p. 346.

¹⁰² *Life of Mrs. E.G. White Seventh-day Adventist Prophet: Her False Claims Refuted* was published in 1919, shortly after D.M. Canright's death. To this day, it is considered by both friends and foes to be the most damaging book ever written about Ellen White.

¹⁰³ Ellen White, Letter 1, 1880, published in *Notebook leaflets from the Elmshaven Library*, pp. 73-75.

¹⁰⁴ Robert K. Wieland and Donald K. Short, *1888 Re-Examined*, p. 17.

¹⁰⁵ Arthur White, *Ellen G. White Volume 6 The Later Elmshaven Years 1905-1915*, page 90.

¹⁰⁶ Ellen White, Letter July 3, 1906 J -242- '06, *Kress Collection*, p. 33.

¹⁰⁷ Ellen White, *Loma Linda Messages*, p. 276, 277.

¹⁰⁸ A.F. Ballenger, *Cast Out for the Cross of Christ* (1909). Emphasis supplied.

¹⁰⁹ Ellen White, Letter 329, 1905, *Selected Messages* Vol. 1, pp. 161-162.

¹¹⁰ Manuscript 59, 1905. Manuscript Release #760, p. 4.

¹¹¹ Elder H.F. Brown's Personal Testimony, Dec. 5, 1984, as cited in *Ellen G. White—The Myth and the Truth*, by Asmund Kaspersen, chapter 6.

¹¹² H.E. Carver, *Mrs. E. G. White's Claims to Divine Inspiration Examined*, (1877).

¹¹³ D.M. Canright, *Life of Mrs. E.G. White Seventh-day Adventist Prophet – Her False Claims Refuted*, pp. 234-235 (1919).

¹¹⁴ Ellen White, *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 253.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 254, 258.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 255.

¹¹⁷ *Compton's Encyclopedia*, vol. 5, p. 470 (1987).

¹¹⁸ *Spalding, Magan Collection*, p. 21 and *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 2, #153, p. 300.

¹¹⁹ Ellen White, *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 206.

¹²⁰ James White, *Present Truth*, “Swine's Flesh,” Nov. 1850.

¹²¹ H.E. Carver, *Mrs. E.G. White's Claims to Divine Inspiration Examined*, 2nd edition, 1877.

¹²² Ellen White, *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 148.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, vol 2, p. 93.

¹²⁴ Arthur White, *Early Years*, Vol. 2, p. 13.

¹²⁵ Ellen White, “To Those Who Are Receiving the Seal of the Living God,” (Broadside 2), Jan., 1849.

¹²⁶ Ellen White, *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, February 27, 1866.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, Oct. 8, 1867.

¹²⁸ Ellen White, *Appeal to Mothers*, pp. 84,85,90.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.* pp. 11,13.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.* pp. 14.

¹³¹ *Ibid.* pp. 14,15.

¹³² *Ibid.* p. 17.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

- ¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 3.
- ¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- ¹³⁶ Gregory Hunt, M.D., *Beware This Cult*, "The Masturbation Connection", 1981.
- ¹³⁷ Sylvester Graham, *Lectures to Young Men on Chastity*, 1834.
- ¹³⁸ *Ibid.*
- ¹³⁹ Sylvester Graham, *Lectures on the Science of Human Life*, pp. 224-286, 1849.
- ¹⁴⁰ Ellen White, *An Appeal to Youth*, pp. 61, 41.
- ¹⁴¹ Ellen White, *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 15, p. 66.
- ¹⁴² D.M. Canright, *The Life of Ellen G. White*, chap. 10, "A Great Plagiarist", 1919.
- ¹⁴³ A.G. Daniells, Transcript of the 1919 Conference on the Spirit of Prophecy.
- ¹⁴⁴ Walter T. Rea, "How the Seventh-day Adventist 'Spirit of Prophecy' was Born," p. 1.
- ¹⁴⁵ Fred Veltman, Ph.D., *Ministry*, Nov. 1990, pp. 11, 14.
- ¹⁴⁶ Ellen White, Letter 56, 1911.
- ¹⁴⁷ Unsigned book review published in the March 18, 1858, issue of the *Review*, vol. 11, #18.
- ¹⁴⁸ Walter T. Rea, *The White Lie*, pp. 223-224.
- ¹⁴⁹ Ellen White, *Manuscript 23*, 1890.
- ¹⁵⁰ Donald McAdams, "Shifting View of Inspiration", *Spectrum*, vol. 10, No. 4, March. 1980.
- ¹⁵¹ Letter to Mr. Keith Moxon from the Chesnut Street United Methodist Church, June 3, 1988, provided to the author by Robert K. Sanders (<http://www.TruthorFables.com>).
- ¹⁵² The Protestants had four solid reasons to oppose Miller:
1. Jesus said no one would know the day of His return (Matt. 25:13)
 2. Time-setting is a device of the devil.
 3. Prophecies were not yet fulfilled (for example, see Matt. 24:14).
 4. Miller ignored Biblical rules of interpretation in his '15 Proofs'.
- ¹⁵³ Ellen White, *Early Writings*, p. 233.
- ¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 254.
- ¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 116.
- ¹⁵⁶ Ellen White, *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 13.
- ¹⁵⁷ Ellen White, *Early Writings*, p. 274.
- ¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 282.

- ¹⁵⁹ Ellen White, *Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4 p. 444.
- ¹⁶⁰ Ellen White, *Historical Sketches*, p. 156.
- ¹⁶¹ Ellen White, *Youth Instructor*, 7-12-1904.
- ¹⁶² Ellen White, *Great Controversy*, p. 604.
- ¹⁶³ Ellen White, *Prophets and Kings*, p. 512.
- ¹⁶⁴ Ellen White, *Early Writings*, p. 32.
- ¹⁶⁵ Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 159.
- ¹⁶⁶ The title, *pope*, which is from the latin *papa* (father), was used in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th centuries AD to refer to various leading bishops. At that time, it did not signify the universal leader of the Christian church, as the title *Pope* is understood today. According to Catholics, the first pope was Peter, and there has been a line of popes succeeding after him. According to *Christianity Through the Centuries* (Earle Cairns, 1981), the "first medieval pope" was Gregory (590-604) who consolidated power within the church in Rome and asserted the spiritual supremacy of the bishop of Rome. However, he disclaimed the title *pope*. Hence, the first pope would be his successor, Sabinian, who followed after him in 606 AD. In reality, the Bishop of Rome was not universally recognized as the leader of the Christian church until at least the 7th, and some historians say the 8th, century AD.
- ¹⁶⁷ Dr. Samuele Bacchiocchi, in an e-mail message written February 8, 1997, to the "Free Catholic Mailing List" catholic@american.edu. While most Adventists accepted Bacchiocchi's findings, some ultra-conservatives derided him as a Jesuit sent secretly by the Catholics to infiltrate and destroy the Adventist church. However, his vocal critics were never able to produce any evidence to refute his teachings or prove he ever had any connections with the Jesuits.
- ¹⁶⁸ Ellen White, *Testimonies*, Vol. 9, pp. 232, 238.
- ¹⁶⁹ Ellen White, *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 3, p. 64, 1864
- ¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 75.
- ¹⁷¹ *Book of Jasher*, 4:18, 1844.
- ¹⁷² B.F. Snook and W.H. Brinkerhoff, *The Visions of E.G. White Not of God*, Chapter 2 (1866).
- ¹⁷³ Ellen White, *Testimonies* Vol. 9, p. 214.
- ¹⁷⁴ Letter 36, 1912 (*Selected Messages*, Book 2, p. 344, paragraphs 1, 2). Also, *The Southern Work*, p. 15, and Manuscript 7, 1896 (*Selected Messages*, Book 2, p. 343, paragraph 2).
- ¹⁷⁵ Uriah Smith, *The Visions of Mrs. E.G. White*, p. 103, 1868.
- ¹⁷⁶ James White, *Review*, Aug. 15, 1868.
- ¹⁷⁷ "Amalgamation of Man and Beast: What did Ellen White Mean?", *Spectrum*, June, 1982, p. 14.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁷⁹ *Webster's Dictionary*, 1913.

¹⁸⁰ Ellen White, *Signs of the Times*, Jan. 8, 1880. She also used the term “basest crime” to describe the adultery and other despicable sins carried out by one of the popes. See *Great Controversy*, p. 106.

¹⁸¹ Leviticus 18:23, 20:16.

¹⁸² W.C. White, *Selected Messages*, Vol. 3, p. 452.

¹⁸³ “Amalgamation of Man and Beast: What did Ellen White Mean?”, pp. 16,17.

¹⁸⁴ Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 1, p. 71.

¹⁸⁵ Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 3, p. 334.

¹⁸⁶ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 64,67, Letter 90, 1906.

¹⁸⁷ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Vol. 3, p. 30.

¹⁸⁸ Merritt G. Kellogg statement [March 1908], *The Story*, p. 107.

¹⁸⁹ *Review and Herald*, Nov. 27, 1883.

¹⁹⁰ Ellen White, *Review and Herald*, Jan. 26, 1905.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, Apr. 19, 1906.

¹⁹² *Adventist Review*, Nov. 19, 1992, pp. 8-9.

¹⁹³ W.W. Prescott, 1919 Conference on Ellen White.